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Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Information-sharing practices between the United Nations and national law enforcement authorities, as well as referrals of possible criminal cases related to United Nations staff, United Nations officials and experts on mission

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 19 of General Assembly resolution 62/247, on strengthening investigations, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly a report on the practices relating to the sharing of information between the Organization and law enforcement authorities of Member States as well as to referrals to such authorities of possible criminal cases related to United Nations staff, United Nations officials and experts on mission, taking into account its resolution 62/63 and other relevant legal instruments. Similar issues were addressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, submitted pursuant to resolution 62/63 (A/63/260).

II. Legal basis for cooperating with law enforcement authorities of Member States

2. Section 21 of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations adopted by the General Assembly on 13 February 1946 (hereinafter "the General Convention") stipulates that the United Nations should cooperate at all times with the appropriate authorities of Members to facilitate the proper administration of justice, secure the observance of police regulations and prevent the occurrence of any abuse in connection with the privileges, immunities and

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

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facilities mentioned in article V of the General Convention. Accordingly, the Organization strives, to the extent possible, to cooperate with the law enforcement authorities of Member States.

3. Moreover, in addition, United Nations officials, in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and experts on mission, pursuant to the regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials, are required to comply with local laws and honour their private legal obligations. In addition, the model status-of-forces agreement for peacekeeping operations provides that the United Nations peacekeeping operation and its members should respect all local laws and regulations and that the special representative/commander should take all appropriate measures to ensure the observance of those obligations (see A/45/594, annex).

III. Sources of privileges and immunities of the United Nations, its officials and experts on mission

4. Article 105, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Organization should enjoy in the territory of each of its Members such privileges and immunities as were necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes. Article 105, paragraph 2, provides that representatives of the Members of the United Nations and officials of the Organization should similarly enjoy such privileges and immunities as were necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Organization. In order to give effect to Article 105 of the Charter, the General Assembly adopted the General Convention, to which, currently, 154 Member States are parties and bound thereby.

5. The following sections are set out under article II of the General Convention, with regard to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations itself and its archives:

> "Section 2. The United Nations, its property and assets wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall enjoy immunity from every form of legal process except insofar as in any particular case it has expressly waived its immunity. It is, however, understood that no waiver of immunity shall extend to any measure of execution.
>
> Section 3. The premises of the United Nations shall be inviolable. The property and assets of the United Nations, wherever located and by whomsoever held, shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation and any other form of interference whether by executive, administrative, judicial or legislative action.
>
> Section 4. The archives of the United Nations, and in general all documents belonging to it or held by it, shall be inviolable wherever located."

6. Under article V, section 18 (a), the General Convention provides that officials of the United Nations should be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in their official capacity. In addition to the immunities and privileges specified in section 18, section 19 of the General Convention provides that the Secretary-General and all Assistant Secretaries-General should be accorded in respect of themselves, their spouses and

minor children, the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities accorded to diplomatic envoys, in accordance with international law.

7. For the purposes of the privileges and immunities granted under the General Convention, the term "officials of the United Nations" was defined by the General Assembly in its resolution 76 (I) of 7 December 1946. In that resolution, the General Assembly approved "the granting of privileges and immunities referred to in article V ... to all members of the staff of the United Nations, with the exception of those who are recruited locally and are assigned to hourly rates". Therefore, all staff members of the United Nations, regardless of nationality, residence, place of recruitment or rank, are considered officials, with the sole exception of those who are both recruited locally and assigned to hourly rates. Furthermore, United Nations Volunteers may enjoy privileges and immunities as "officials of the United Nations" when specifically provided for in such agreements as status-of-forces agreements and the standard basic assistance agreements of the United Nations Development Programme.

8. Under article VI, section 22 (a), (b) and (c), the General Convention provides that experts (other than officials coming within the scope of article V) performing missions for the United Nations should be accorded such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions during the period of their missions, including the time spent on journeys in connection with their missions. In particular they should be accorded:

> "(a) Immunity from personal arrest or detention and from seizure of their personal baggage;
>
> (b) In respect of words spoken or written and acts done by them in the course of the performance of their mission, immunity from legal process of every kind. This immunity from legal process shall continue to be accorded notwithstanding that the persons concerned are no longer employed on missions for the United Nations;
>
> (c) Inviolability for all papers and documents."

9. Individuals having the status of experts on mission may include persons engaged by the Organization on a consultant contract or designated by United Nations organs to carry out missions or functions for the United Nations such as rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council or members of the International Law Commission. Furthermore, in the context of peacekeeping or peace support operations some categories of personnel have the status of experts on mission. These include military observers, military liaison officers, military advisers, arms monitors, members of formed police units, seconded individual United Nations police and seconded corrections officers. The categories of personnel deemed experts on mission are usually provided in the relevant status-of-forces or status-of-mission agreements.

10. In addition, certain types of agreements entered into between the Organization and Member States also grant privileges and immunities to the United Nations consistent with the Charter, such as headquarters agreements with host States and the agreements mentioned above. Some Member States hosting offices of the United Nations have adopted national laws and regulations that provide detailed arrangements for the application of the privileges and immunities of the Organization, its officials and experts on mission in the national context. All those

agreements are therefore sources of legal rules for determining the scope of privileges and immunities in the specific context of the host country.

IV. Practices relating to information-sharing and referrals to national law enforcement officials

11. The two principal situations in which information is passed between the Organization and law enforcement authorities are: (a) when the Organization, through its own investigative processes, has uncovered prima facie evidence of potential criminal conduct within the jurisdiction of one of its Member States and decides to refer that evidence to the Member State for its appropriate action; and (b) when the Organization has been approached by a Member State for access to information or material[1] and/or witnesses in the context of an external investigation by law enforcement authorities and/or criminal proceedings being conducted by the Member State.

A. Referrals of credible evidence of potential criminal conduct to law enforcement authorities of Member States

12. It is the policy of the Organization that officials and experts on mission should be held accountable whenever they commit criminal acts, particularly crimes related to sexual exploitation and abuse, human trafficking, fraud and corruption, not only because of the prejudice or harm caused to the victims but also because they undermine the work and image of the United Nations. To that effect, various measures have been put in place. For example, in the context of sexual exploitation and abuse, the Secretary-General promulgated in section 5 of his bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 that if, after proper investigation, there was evidence to support allegations of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, those cases might, upon consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, be referred to national authorities for criminal prosecution.

13. Consequently, where the Organization, after proper internal investigation using its own investigative processes, establishes credible allegations that reveal that a crime may have been committed by United Nations officials or experts on mission, such allegations are ordinarily brought to the attention of the Member State having jurisdiction over the alleged conduct. Given the legal issues involved in the referral to the relevant State of credible allegations that reveal a crime may have been committed, including issues related to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations under the General Convention, all such cases are reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs before a final determination is made on any particular referral. In reviewing such cases, the relevant programme managers are consulted, as appropriate, to determine the wider interests of the Organization.

14. The Organization refers credible allegations to law enforcement authorities by providing a written report on such allegations to the permanent mission of the Member State concerned for its appropriate action. In view of the inviolability of

[1] The term "information or material" used throughout the present report includes documents, other property of the United Nations containing such information as computer hard drives and any other property or assets of the United Nations.

United Nations archives, set out in article II, section 4, of the General Convention, the Organization provides the report on the credible allegations to the permanent mission on a voluntary basis, without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations or its officials and experts on mission. In this way, the Secretary-General upholds the principle that such cooperation is not the result of, or subject to, any binding judicial process and that his decision on the nature and extent of the cooperation to be extended is a consequence of the determination of the Secretary-General that, in his sole opinion, the cooperation would not in any way prejudice the interests of the Organization. Any follow-up requests for additional information or material and/or access to United Nations officials or experts on mission is generally made by the law enforcement authorities to the United Nations through the relevant permanent mission to the United Nations and are handled in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

B. Cooperation in national investigations by law enforcement authorities and in criminal proceedings

15. Where the law enforcement authorities of a Member State are investigating allegations of criminal conduct, whether of a United Nations official or an expert on mission, and the authorities require access to information or material held by the United Nations or to United Nations officials or experts on mission, the law enforcement authorities request such access in writing.

16. As regards requests for information or material, the Organization reviews the request, taking into account such matters as confidentiality, privilege and practical impediments to the production of the information or material, in addition to any policy considerations which, together, assist in determining the interests of the Organization in releasing the information or material. Once the decision has been made to release the requested information or material, such information or material is generally provided to the law enforcement authorities through the relevant permanent mission to the United Nations. In view of the inviolability of United Nations archives set out in article II, section 4, of the General Convention, the Organization provides the documentary information or material on a voluntary basis, without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations. In this way, the Secretary-General upholds the principle that cooperation is not the result of, or subject to, any binding judicial process and that his decision on the nature and extent of the cooperation to be extended depends on his sole opinion of the United Nations interests at stake in the matter.

17. In respect of requests for access to United Nations officials or experts on mission in the context of investigations on matters in which they may have been involved or have knowledge of within the context of their official functions, a similar procedure is followed. Upon receipt of a request, which generally comes through the relevant permanent mission to the United Nations, the Organization reviews the request, taking into account such matters as confidentiality, privilege and practical impediments to the access requested, in addition to any policy considerations which, together, assist in determining the interests of the Organization in authorizing access to the United Nations officials or experts on mission.

18. Pursuant to the General Convention, and as elaborated above, the Organization, its officials and experts on mission are immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in their official capacity. As a consequence of such functional immunity, once a determination has been made that it is in the interests of the Organization to cooperate with the law enforcement authorities, the United Nations officials or experts on mission are made available on a voluntary basis, without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and those accorded to the officials or experts on mission concerned. In this way, the Secretary-General reinforces the principle that cooperation is not the result of, or subject to, any binding judicial process and that his decision on the nature and extent of the cooperation to be extended is based on his sole determination that cooperation does not prejudice the interests of the Organization. The Member State is also advised that should any formal testimony be required from or formal proceedings commenced against an official or an expert on mission, any further cooperation would require that the Member State address, generally through its permanent mission to the United Nations, a written request to the Organization for a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the individual concerned.

V. Requests by law enforcement authorities for waivers of immunity for the purposes of formal testimony and/or formal proceedings involving a United Nations official or expert on mission

19. If the law enforcement authorities of a Member State require formal testimony or wish to file criminal proceedings against a United Nations official or expert on mission in connection with a matter arising in the context of the official duties of that official or expert, such authorities must make a written request to the Organization, generally through their permanent missions to the United Nations, for the waiver of immunities of the individual concerned.

20. As provided in the Charter, privileges and immunities granted to the United Nations are those deemed necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes. The purpose and scope of privileges and immunities of officials and experts on mission are defined in the General Convention in a manner that takes into account the role of such personnel in the carrying out of activities in pursuit of the purposes of the Organization. Thus, in addition to section 21, article V, section 20, provides the following in respect of officials of the Organization:

> Privileges and immunities are granted to officials in the interests of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. The Secretary-General shall have the right and the duty to waive the immunity of any official in any case where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and can be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations.

21. Similarly, article VI, section 23, specifies the purposes for which privileges and immunities are granted to experts on mission as follows:

> Privileges and immunities are granted to experts in the interests of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves.

> The Secretary-General shall have the right and the duty to waive the immunity of any expert in any case where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and it can be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations.

22. Pursuant to article V, section 20, of the General Convention (in respect of officials) and article VI, section 23 (in respect of experts on mission), the Secretary-General has the right and the duty to waive immunity where, in his opinion, immunity would impede the course of justice and could be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations. Thus, pursuant to the aforementioned provisions of the General Convention and in the interest of maintaining the international character and independence of personnel who serve in the United Nations, whether officials or experts on mission, as well as to ensure that the provisions of the General Convention are applied in a consistent manner and in the interests of the Organization, the decision whether to waive immunity in any particular case is for the Secretary-General alone to make.

23. This interpretation was reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion on the difference relating to immunity from legal process of a special rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights of 29 April 1999 (so-called "Cumaraswamy case"), in which it observed that the Secretary-General, as the chief administrative officer of the Organization, had the primary responsibility to safeguard the interests of the Organization, and that, to that end, it was up to him to assess whether its agents had acted within the scope of their functions and, where he so concluded, to protect those agents, including experts on mission, by asserting their immunity (para. 60). Similarly, consistent with sections 20 and 23 of the General Convention, the Court reaffirmed that it was for the Secretary-General to determine whether the official or expert on mission had acted within the scope of his/her functions.

24. Accordingly, if the Secretary-General determines that the official or expert on mission concerned acted outside the scope of his/her functions, unless the official in question enjoyed privileges and immunities accorded to diplomatic envoys in accordance with article 19 of the General Convention or pursuant to the relevant headquarters agreement, status-of-forces agreement or status-of-mission agreement, the official or expert on mission would not enjoy any immunity and a waiver would not be necessary. In such cases, the law enforcement authorities would be advised in writing, generally through the relevant permanent mission to the United Nations, that no waiver of immunity was required.

25. If, however, the Secretary-General determines that the conduct in question, or the testimony requested, falls within the immunities accorded to the official or the expert on mission concerned, a waiver of immunity may only be provided by the Secretary-General pursuant to sections 20 or 23 of the Convention where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and could be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations. This determination is within the exclusive authority of the Secretary-General. Should the Secretary-General determine that the immunity of the individual concerned could be waived without prejudice to the interests of the Organization, a decision setting forth the scope and purpose of the waiver would be communicated in writing to the Member State.

VI. Conclusion

26. Overall, the United Nations has not experienced in general terms any problems in its cooperation with the law enforcement authorities of Member States in sharing information or material for criminal investigations. There has been a significant increase in the number of requests made to the Organization from law enforcement authorities of Member States for information or material. The United Nations is currently cooperating with the law enforcement authorities in 65 jurisdictions of 28 Member States. Many of the requests are wide in nature and scope, a factor which has generated a significant increase in the workload of the relevant departments and offices of the Organization, in particular the Office of Legal Affairs, which has to manage the Organization's response to the requests for evidentiary material as well as all issues related to the cooperation with Member States under the framework of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and other relevant instruments.

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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/167, in which the Assembly decided to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session a comprehensive report on the situation in that country.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has not recognized the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has not to date succeeded in engaging the Government of that country in a substantive dialogue on the situation of human rights there. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has not accepted the High Commissioner's offer to engage in technical cooperation activities, as recommended in the resolutions. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, appointed by the Human Rights Council, has not been extended any cooperation or granted access to the country by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Secretary-General registers his serious concern at the lack of tangible progress on the part of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in addressing the range of serious human rights concerns mentioned in resolution 62/167.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

** The present report was submitted after the deadline so as to include the most recent developments.

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The report outlines the status of the engagement and cooperation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with international human rights mechanisms such as the treaty bodies, special procedures and the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council. The report also contains information submitted by other United Nations agencies concerning the right to food, the right to health, the rights of the child and the rights of refugees.

Particular attention is drawn to the food situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its impact on the population. The Secretary-General welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of that country to facilitate external food aid and promote food sustainability. He advocates the need for the Government to allocate budget resources and adopt policy measures to alleviate the impact of the food situation, and highlights the need to prevent discrimination in the distribution of food and health services.

The Secretary-General also welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to facilitate access for humanitarian relief and to increase cooperation with United Nations agencies. He renews his call on the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sustain cooperation with the United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors. He urges the international community to continue to support humanitarian efforts.

The Secretary-General urges the Government to safeguard fundamental rights and freedoms and show visible signs of domestic legal reform so as to fulfil its treaty obligations and comply with international standards. He renews his recommendation that the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea engage in a constructive dialogue with the High Commissioner for Human Rights. He stresses the independent role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and appeals to the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to positively consider its offer of technical cooperation. He also urges the Government to grant access to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Secretary-General welcomes the positive developments under the six-party talks and calls upon all regional and international actors to facilitate the creation of an environment conducive to generating greater engagement between the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international community. Furthermore, he hopes that through gradual cooperation and incremental confidence-building measures, the United Nations will be able to take on a greater role in helping to promote and protect human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	4
II.	Cooperation with international human rights mechanisms	6
	A. Treaty bodies	6
	B. Special procedures	6
	C. Universal Periodic Review	8
III.	Role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the promotion and protection of human rights	8
	Technical cooperation	8
IV.	Assistance extended by the United Nations system for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	9
	A. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	10
	B. World Food Programme	10
	C. World Health Organization	12
	D. United Nations Children's Fund	14
	E. United Nations Population Fund	15
	F. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	16
V.	Conclusions and recommendations	16

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/167, in which the Assembly decided to continue its examination of the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at its sixty-third session and requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

2. Since the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/62/318), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has not succeeded in engaging the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a substantive dialogue on the situation of human rights in that country. Offers of technical assistance made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights have been rejected by the Government. In addition, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has not, regrettably, been allowed access into the country since the establishment of his mandate in 2004. Visit requests by other special procedures mandate-holders have similarly not been granted. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has indicated that it does not recognize the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/7/15) and the General Assembly (62/167) on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Government has stated that it considers the resolutions selective and politicized and that they reflected double standards. The Government does not accept technical assistance from OHCHR; the proposal for technical assistance is recommended in both resolutions, which the Government rejects.

3. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a party to four of the seven core international human rights treaties: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The country's third and fourth periodic reports concerning the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child at its fiftieth session, in January 2009. However, its periodic reports concerning the implementation of the other three core human rights treaties remain outstanding.

4. The Secretary-General registers his serious concern at the fact that he is unable to report substantive progress on the part of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in addressing the range of serious human rights concerns outlined by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/167. Reports emanating from the country continue to indicate trends of arbitrary arrests, absence of due process and the rule of law, torture, inhumane conditions of detention, public execution, ill-treatment of refugees or asylum-seekers repatriated from abroad, and forced labour. In addition, reports also indicate that the population is being denied the freedoms of thought, religion, opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association, movement and access to information. The separate report submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-third session by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea provides a more detailed account of those concerns.

5. Although their veracity could not be independently confirmed, reports from a range of sources continue to cite a high number of public executions. There is

allegedly a crackdown on petty economic criminals, whose number has increased owing to the current serious food shortages and difficult living conditions, which have also led to an increase in the number of *kkotjebi* (homeless children). When forcibly repatriated, nationals who had left the country without State permission continue to face interrogation, mistreatment and sometimes torture, followed by imprisonment and forced labour. Punishment for the family members of defectors has reportedly been used as a deterrent to prevent defection. There have been continued accounts of prisoners being subjected to forced labour, ideological rehabilitation and sometimes torture, many of whom allegedly suffer from malnutrition and chronic diseases. Female prisoners are allegedly subjected to sexual assault and forced abortion. The trafficking of women for the purposes of prostitution and forced marriage also continues to be reported. It is regrettable that, owing to the lack of a substantive dialogue and technical cooperation with the Government, the latter's views on the situation regarding human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could not be more fully reflected in the present report.[1]

6. The Secretary-General also highlights his particular concern about the severity of the food situation the country is currently facing and its impact on the economic, social and cultural rights of the population. In a 2008 New Year editorial carried by major newspapers in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it was stated that the food deficit was a national problem, and a series of measures was outlined to respond to the situation. The editorial stated that no other task was more urgent or more important than solving the people's food problem. The World Food Programme (WFP) warned in July 2008 that millions in the country were at risk of slipping towards precarious hunger levels. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported that the cereal deficit for the 2007/08 marketing year (November to October) was estimated at 1.66 million tons. On a positive note, in June and July 2008 the Government agreed to increased food assistance and to the expansion of the operations of United Nations agencies such as WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the country. WFP and FAO were able to conduct a food security assessment aimed at correctly identifying the populations and regions most in need. The Secretary-General is encouraged by the Government's recognition of the urgency of the problem and its desire to address the issue of the people's sustainable access to food, and he welcomes the Government's extension of cooperation to the United Nations agencies and encourages the international community to lend its full support to efforts to address this specific issue.

7. The Secretary-General is further encouraged by the positive developments under the six-party talks aimed at the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. As he has stated previously, he urges all participants to intensify their efforts and dialogue so as to further advance this multilateral process and contribute to the resolution of bilateral issues. He also welcomes the signing by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum in July 2008. Peace and stability in North-East Asia will serve as a catalyst for greater engagement between the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[1] The present report was sent to the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva for comments.

and the international community on a range of issues, including the promotion and protection of human rights.

8. The present report updates information on cooperation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with international human rights mechanisms and on the activities undertaken by the United Nations, in particular by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to promote and protect human rights in the country. The report also contains information submitted by other United Nations agencies concerning the right to food, the right to health, the rights of the child and the rights of refugees.

II. Cooperation with international human rights mechanisms

A. Treaty bodies

9. On 10 December 2007, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea submitted its combined third and fourth periodic reports (CRC/C/PRK/4) concerning the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which had been due on 20 October 2007. The Committee on the Rights of the Child will examine the report at its fiftieth session, in January 2009.

10. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has yet to submit its third periodic report concerning the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was due in January 2004; its second periodic report concerning the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was due in March 2006; and its third periodic report concerning the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which was due in June 2008.

B. Special procedures

11. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has to date not issued a standing invitation to the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and has not accepted the requests to visit the country made by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

12. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food sent two written communications to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, on 20 March and 7 April 2008, respectively, seeking clarification concerning alleged human rights violations. The first communication, which was sent jointly by the Special Rapporteurs, dealt with alleged public executions. The second communication, which was sent by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, dealt with the safety of nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who were

returned to the country. No response has been received from the Government to date.

1. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

13. On 27 March 2008, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a period of one year.[2] The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated at the seventh session of the Human Rights Council that it resolutely opposed and rejected the continuation of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has argued that the resolution establishing the mandate of the Special Rapporteur "is a product of political confrontation", that "the existence of the 'Special Rapporteur' has been consistent with unjust manipulations" and that "elimination of the 'Special Rapporteur' really conforms to the current trend against politicization of human rights" (see A/HRC/7/G/3). The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has to date not extended any cooperation to the Special Rapporteur and has not approved his requests to visit the country.

14. The Special Rapporteur visited the neighbouring countries of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — Mongolia (15-21 December 2007), Japan (15-19 January 2008) and the Republic of Korea (19-24 January 2008) — to gather information on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from a variety of Government, civil society and United Nations interlocutors. He highlighted the unresolved issue of persons abducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as the protection needs of those fleeing the country and the issue of family reunification.

15. The Special Rapporteur submitted his last report to the General Assembly (A/62/318) on 26 October 2007 and to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/7/20) on 13 March 2008. In the latter report, the Special Rapporteur analysed the information relating to human rights and the development process; access to food and other necessities; rights and freedoms; displacement and asylum; groups of special concern; and the consequences of violence and violations. The Special Rapporteur will submit a separate report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

2. Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

16. In its latest report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/7/2), the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances stated that it had transmitted nine cases to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, all of which remain outstanding.

17. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea transmitted three communications to the Working Group, dated 8 January, 10 April and 7 August 2007, respectively. The Working Group found that the responses did not contain

[2] In accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2004/13 and 2005/11. In its decision 1/102, the Human Rights Council decided to extend all mandates and mechanisms transferred to it by the Commission on Human Rights pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251.

sufficient information to clarify the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared persons. The Working Group hopes that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will adopt effective measures to clarify the outstanding cases.

C. Universal Periodic Review

18. One of the innovations introduced by the Human Rights Council with the intention of ensuring the even-handed assessment of countries is the Universal Periodic Review system. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva has actively participated in the review of reports submitted by other Member States at the first and second sessions of the Universal Periodic Review, held in 2008.

19. The review of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea under the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review will take place at the sixth session of the Review, scheduled to be held in 2009. In that regard, the High Commissioner for Human Rights offered technical assistance to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (see paras. 20-22 below). The Secretary-General encourages the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in this process.

III. Role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in assisting the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the promotion and protection of human rights

Technical cooperation

20. The High Commissioner for Human Rights invited the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva to a meeting on 11 February 2008, with a view to exploring ways of initiating technical cooperation between the Office of the High Commissioner and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

21. During the meeting, the High Commissioner suggested areas in which technical assistance could be offered to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in particular in the light of the forthcoming review of the country under the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review mechanism, scheduled be held in 2009. The High Commissioner suggested that technical assistance could be extended in the areas of human rights treaty body reporting and ratification of core human rights treaties. She also suggested that an OHCHR assessment mission could visit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with a view to exploring such possibilities with the relevant officials on the ground.

22. The Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reiterated that his Government did not recognize the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Government considered that the resolutions were selective and politicized and reflected double standards. The Permanent Representative stated that his Government was therefore unable to accept

the High Commissioner's offer. The Permanent Representative nonetheless stated that he had taken note of the High Commissioner's willingness to offer technical assistance and that his Government would continue to respect its treaty obligations and cooperate with treaty bodies. To date, no further communication has been received from the Government on this matter. A note was subsequently prepared by the secretariat of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/7/47). The Secretary-General encourages the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond positively to the High Commissioner's offer of technical assistance.

IV. Assistance extended by the United Nations system for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

23. In a letter dated 26 May 2008, the High Commissioner for Human Rights invited United Nations bodies to submit to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights relevant information on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Office subsequently received relevant information from the following United Nations entities: the United Nations country team in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea,[3] the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the World Food Programme (WFP); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the World Health Organization (WHO); and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

24. The United Nations country team in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea observed that 2007 was marked by a gradual rapprochement with the international community, with several positive developments in the political and security arenas. According to the country team, this created a more conducive environment for foreign aid and investment, which translated into more resources flowing into the country. Nevertheless, international funding continues to fall well below the level required by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to revive key sectors of the economy and restore basic social services to the levels enjoyed before 1995. Owing to the absence of international financial institutions and major bilateral aid programmes, the United Nations system continues to play an essential role in development, recovery and emergency aid, capacity-building and the facilitation of international contacts and other forms of engagement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international community.

25. Torrential rains in August 2007 caused severe flooding, landslides and mudslides in nine provinces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in Pyongyang. In response to the Government's request for international assistance, United Nations agencies and two resident international non-governmental organizations jointly developed an integrated response plan and appealed for $14.1 million to address the most pressing needs in the areas of food, health and water and sanitation. Donor response was swift, and the appeal was 105 per cent

[3] The United Nations country team in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea currently comprises five resident United Nations agencies — FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. Three agencies have their representatives based in Pyongyang (UNICEF, WFP and WHO), while FAO, UNFPA and UNESCO have representative offices with regional coverage in Beijing.

funded. As a result, more than 5 million flood-affected people received humanitarian supplies and benefited from rehabilitation interventions. Cooperation with national counterparts was marked by a degree of openness, which included the granting of temporary visas for additional international emergency staff and permissions for rapid assessments and the monitoring of affected/supported areas. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea publicly thanked the United Nations system and the donor community for the emergency support. In June and July 2008, cooperation with the Government took another step forward, as United Nations agencies were allowed increased access to carry out their mandates within the country.

A. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

26. FAO reported that total cereal output decreased steeply to about 3 million metric tons, compared with 4 million tons in 2006, following heavy floods in August and September 2007 and the subsequent poor harvest. That brought to an end the steady recovery in agricultural production that had been under way since 2000. The cereal deficit for the 2007/08 marketing year (November/October) is estimated at 1.66 million tons on the basis of a per capita cereal-equivalent consumption close to 170 kg (including potatoes and soybeans). The downward trend in imports since the 2000/01 marketing year will therefore need to be reversed.

27. Winter/spring production by double-cropping was expanded by an extra 202,000 hectares, with increased cultivation of potatoes relative to that of wheat and barley. Indications so far point towards higher early potato crop production than last year, despite fertilizer shortfalls and inclement weather. Since no donation of fertilizer has been received this year, fertilizer allocation to cooperative farms is approximately 50 per cent less than in previous years. The fertilizer shortage is the main constraint so far affecting prospects for the main season cereal crops (rice and maize).

B. World Food Programme

28. WFP noted that rising domestic food prices, limited external assistance and a large domestic food gap could result in aggravated vulnerability levels for some areas of the country already suffering from chronic food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition.

29. WFP observed that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to be vulnerable to flooding in the summer months, which has a significant impact on the agricultural sector. According to Government reports, the August 2007 floods were concentrated mainly in the southern and western parts of the country, which account for the majority of the country's agricultural production and also recorded the largest drop in harvest output. According to the FAO/WFP nationwide Rapid Food Security Assessment carried out in June and July 2008,[4] transfers of food from these normally surplus "cereal bowl" provinces to the deficit northern provinces are much

[4] The FAO/WFP nationwide Rapid Food Security Assessment qualitatively determines the food security situation of particular population groups in terms of food availability, access and utilization.

reduced. The northern provinces are generally considered to be more vulnerable to food insecurity owing to their mountainous terrain, harsher weather and remote location. WFP/UNICEF nutritional surveys consistently indicate higher malnutrition rates in those regions; a decrease in access to food could result in aggravated vulnerability levels there.

30. In early 2008, the public distribution system was to have officially resumed food distribution to all its dependants (approximately 70 per cent of the population) following the temporary disruptions that occurred immediately after the August floods. The media, however, continued to report that distribution in most provinces of the country was limited to selected population groups, and other international organizations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have received reports of serious cuts in rations under the system. WFP monitoring showed that progressive cuts had led to rations of 150 grams of cereals per person per day in June 2008, down from 450 grams in early 2008.

31. WFP monitoring shows that food intake in general remains poor, with most of the population subsisting on a diet of cereals and vegetables insufficient by far in terms of protein, fat and micronutrients. A reduction in public distribution system rations could have adverse consequences for the food security and nutrition of vulnerable groups, which lack purchasing power or the ability to access other food sources. Most of those who depend on such rations are urban dwellers who are already suffering from the effects of unemployment and economic regression and who have limited access to land for growing crops or rearing animals. The FAO/WFP nationwide Rapid Food Security Assessment found that close to three quarters of households have reduced their food intake, that more malnourished and ill children were being admitted to hospitals and institutions, and that diarrhoea caused by increased consumption of wild foods was one of the leading causes of malnutrition among children under the age of 5.

32. Over the past year, the price of rice has tripled and that of maize quadrupled. Owing to the limited purchases made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the international market, the increase in prices is more likely the result of decreased domestic supplies than of the international global food crisis. The steep increases in market prices of basic commodities can have serious consequences for the food security of the poorest as the importance of markets as a food source grows.

33. The continued application of measures intended to limit private-market trade may have had an adverse effect on the ability of some people to access food or resources. The 1 October 2007 ban on the involvement of women aged 40 years or less in food-market activities, aimed at ensuring that they work for State agencies, reportedly remains in place, as does the ban on market trade in cereals.

34. The duration of the food deficit will depend in large part on the country's ability to sufficiently rehabilitate the agricultural sector and resume making the progressive advancements in production experienced from 2001 to 2005. Prospects are uncertain owing to the continuing shortages of fuel, machinery and quality inputs such as chemical fertilizer. The lack of sufficient chemical fertilizer in time for the May/June planting season raises concerns over the outlook for the 2008 fall harvest.

35. The steady drop in both multilateral and bilateral food aid since the end of 2005 has increased concerns relating to the country's ability to obtain sufficient external resources to cover the food deficit. WFP continues to account for the bulk of multilateral food aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Early in 2008, WFP was reaching up to 1.2 million people in 50 counties in five provinces. The beneficiaries were mainly traditionally vulnerable and food-insecure groups, such as small children in nurseries, kindergartens and primary schools, as well as pregnant and lactating women. Total WFP food assistance came to 37,000 metric tons in 2007, including the emergency food assistance provided in response to the August 2007 floods. The Government indicated to WFP early in May that it would welcome increased emergency food relief to help alleviate the food shortages caused by the floods and the low harvest output. The Government has also made attempts to source external food aid to alleviate the food problem. At the time of writing, in July 2008, 22,600 tons of food aid had been delivered by WFP, and some 110,000 tons had been received from China. Moreover, up to 500,000 tons of assistance has been pledged by the United States of America, and 3,000 tons have been received from the Russian Federation. The offer by the Republic of Korea of 50,000 tons of corn remains. Despite these donations, there is still a deficit of more than 1 million tons.

36. In June 2008, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea agreed to increased food assistance through an agreement with WFP. The agreement would expand WFP operations in the country and allow humanitarian access to many areas currently not receiving international food aid. As of July 2008, WFP had access to 131 counties, up from 50 counties last year, and approval of visas for up to 59 international staff, a significant improvement over the 10 visas granted in 2007. New emergency operations will cover about 6.5 million people. WFP has made numerous household visits and has for the first time been able to visit county warehouses. The improved operating conditions will enable WFP to better assess the situation in terms of food security, agriculture and nutrition/health, significantly improve its ability to correctly identify the hungry and ensure better targeting and monitoring of food aid. Overall, the first four weeks of the WFP augmented operation (reaching around 3.7 million people) has seen good cooperation from central, provincial and county officials.

37. During the FAO/WFP Rapid Food Security Assessment conducted in mid-2008, the Government cooperated well with WFP to enable the mission to take place: visas for extra international staff were made available and access to households and hospitals was granted, and WFP was permitted to randomly select which counties to visit among the 160 accessible counties. The findings of the assessment, which gives precise information on the nature of the shortages and the level of response needed, will guide the programme design of future WFP operations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

C. World Health Organization

38. WHO reported that the health system of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is still recovering from the setback the country suffered in the 1990s. Limited resources for humanitarian assistance were allocated to the sectors of health, water and sanitation. Although population health indicators have started to improve, some vulnerable groups, especially women and children, are still experiencing major

hardships due to the limited capacity of the national health system to respond to their needs.

39. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has the fundamentals of a very strong health system, underpinned by an extensive health workforce in which one medical doctor provides clinic-based and outreach health services for every 130 households. This primary care system is backed up by a substantial network of health facilities, extending from primary-care inpatients at *ri* (primary health-care unit) hospitals to tertiary-level care at national hospitals. While the number and distribution of the health workforce is not the issue, given the health system constraints and epidemiological and demographic changes, the quality and composition of that workforce may require further review. In terms of training and supervision, the country has in place strong systems for pre-service and in-service training. However, institutions and their staff are underresourced, and greater focus is placed on knowledge acquisition rather than on skills acquisition or competency assessment.

40. Many current practices in the health and medical field in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are obsolete as a result of several decades of professional isolation. A long-term training programme for staff at all levels of the health sector is needed, both within and outside the country. The quality of health care provided in *ri* clinics and county hospitals is low as a result of the poor condition of buildings, the lack of water and other services, poorly maintained essential medical equipment and the lack of supplies. Health professionals have limited knowledge and skills in relation to best international practice. Children and women in particular receive inadequate anaesthetics and poor-quality surgical and medical treatment.

41. The current WHO programme in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea focuses on key health priorities, including maternal and child health; control of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and vaccine-preventable diseases; the strengthening of the capacity of the Ministry of Public Health for disease surveillance and outbreak response; health promotion; control of non-communicable diseases; and the strengthening of the health system. Those programmes are implemented through a policy dialogue and a combination of professional training to improve skills and knowledge and the provision of essential medical supplies, equipment and medicines.

42. WHO concluded that an improvement in the health services in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea can best be achieved through a long-term, well-balanced development programme and by addressing the main components that are crucial to developing a sustainable health system. Despite the underlying problems facing the health services in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, several important results have been achieved. Public health indicators have improved as a result of increased immunization coverage, a reduced incidence of malaria and a tuberculosis control programme with nationwide coverage. That progress has been achieved through programmes implemented by the national authorities with support from external agencies based in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and generously backed by assistance from a number of external donors.

D. United Nations Children's Fund

43. In August 2007, UNICEF supported a comprehensive emergency response in flood-affected counties in the areas of health, nutrition, education and water supply. In October 2007, a rapid nutritional screening conducted in selected areas of the 19 most flood-affected counties indicated that 13.9 per cent of the children under the age of 5 who were screened showed signs of acute malnutrition. It is likely that the high incidence of diarrhoea and the food shortfall due to harvest losses caused by floods may have further aggravated the nutritional situation of children.

44. To address the poor nutritional situation of women and children, UNICEF is continuing to support a wide range of interventions aimed at preventing and treating malnutrition. In late 2007, an effective nutritional paste known as ready-to-use therapeutic food was introduced in all baby homes to treat severely malnourished children before complications arise. Baby homes are institutions that cater to children without primary caregivers, who usually have the highest risk of severe malnutrition. In addition, a pilot programme on the community-based management of severe acute malnutrition, also involving the use of ready-to-use therapeutic food, was initiated in one county in July 2008. Based on the results of the pilot, this community approach will be gradually expanded.

45. On the basis of the lessons learned during the flood response, UNICEF and other agencies worked with sectoral ministries in the first half of 2008 to reinforce flood preparedness in the areas of health, water supply and education. Critical emergency supplies are being pre-positioned in various locations to respond to a flood scenario affecting 25,000 families. In April 2008, UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of three county town gravity-fed water-supply systems, which are providing safe water to more than 80,000 people.

46. In April 2008, UNICEF and the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also agreed to invite two international child-protection specialists to conduct an assessment of the situation of children without primary caregivers living in institutions and to recommend an action plan that will enable UNICEF and the Government to improve the level of care for children living in such institutions.

47. In order to strengthen protection against measles and avoid further outbreaks, UNICEF and WHO supported the introduction of the second dose of measles vaccines, which started in June 2008.

48. In the area of education, UNICEF is continuing to work with the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education through the introduction of life-skills-based education on health and hygiene, the revision of the mathematics curriculum in primary school, the refurbishment of teacher-training colleges in selected county towns, and the improvement of the learning environment in selected schools, with a focus on school sanitation.

49. In July 2008, UNICEF and other agencies regained access to three remote northern provinces that are known to be the most vulnerable in the country and that had been closed since early 2007. As a result, UNICEF resumed its assistance, providing essential medicines and nutrition supplies to support basic health and nutrition services. Additional progress is evidenced by the fact that UNICEF has managed to obtain the secondment of a few technical local staff (two engineers and

one nutritionist). Finally, UNICEF is able to conduct more capacity-building activities in all sectors.

E. United Nations Population Fund

50. UNFPA has been supporting information education and communication activities at the national and grass-roots levels to promote reproductive-health rights, gender equality and equity, and HIV/AIDS prevention through various country programmes. UNFPA has also been seeking to expand the range of contraceptive methods available in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, so that women in both rural and urban areas can have greater choice in terms of contraceptives, reduce the need for abortion (in particular repeated abortion) and meet the needs for family planning. It is estimated that to sustain a contraceptive prevalence rate of above 55 per cent, $2 million worth of contraceptives are needed per annum in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That remains a great challenge for the Government, which has scarce resources, and for the few international organizations working in the area.

51. UNFPA provides support on issues relating to women's health in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in particular to that of pregnant women. UNFPA reports with great concern a sharp increase in the rate of maternal mortality in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, especially in the late 1990s, from 50 per 100,000 live births to more than 100, due primarily to consecutive natural disasters which had a tremendous negative impact on women's nutritional status, as well as to the collapse of the national economy, which dramatically widened the resource gap in the area of health, in particular maternal and child health.

52. While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has a modest level of maternal mortality compared with other countries in the region, there is still insufficient credible data on maternal mortality available. The discrepancy in the maternal mortality rates quoted by various sources, which have ranged from 80 per 100,000 live births to 1,000 in the past few years, is too great to allow for the assessment, with any degree of credibility, of the maternal health situation. To tackle that challenge, UNFPA is working with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to conduct a population census in October 2008 that will include key questions on maternal mortality and from which credible, reliable data on maternal mortality can be generated for a more accurate interpretation, in 2009, of the maternal health status of the country. It is also important to underline the joint efforts made by UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, with the active participation of the Ministry of Health of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Through such efforts, a national strategy for reproductive health and a joint national training protocol at different service levels have been developed to guide the efforts of various international agencies and the Government in working towards a reduction in the rate of maternal mortality and morbidity.

F. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

53. UNHCR continues to observe that a constant flow of nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to leave the country to seek protection, assistance and/or settlement elsewhere. Such movements have given rise to a number of concerns: reports that the right to freedom of movement, including the right to leave the country, has been severely curtailed; an increased risk of smuggling and of trafficking in human beings, in particular women, for the purposes of prostitution and/or forced marriage; violations of the fundamental principle of non-refoulement by countries of transit; reports of severe punishment in case of forced return to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; restrictive policies applied by countries of transit, in particular arrest and detention; lack of enjoyment of basic social and economic rights; lack of access to legal stay and related documentation (even for long-stayers); no formal recording and/or documentation of vital events; limited possibilities with respect to regularizing the stay of children born of mixed parents (one national of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and a national of another country); and prolonged exit procedures that have a severe impact on the well-being of nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea awaiting settlement in third countries. Unaccompanied women and children are particularly affected by those issues. UNHCR continues to warn that, should the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea deteriorate and movement of its nationals increase, the countries of transit could find it difficult to cope owing to their limited capacity.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

54. **The Secretary-General welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage external food aid and to address the population's need for sustainable access to food. He calls on the Government to allocate corresponding budget resources and to adopt policy measures to alleviate the impact of the food shortage and to ensure food security.**

55. **The Secretary-General welcomes also the efforts made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to facilitate humanitarian access. The increased operating space for the United Nations agencies to carry out their mandates will allow outreach to a larger part of the population in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Secretary-General calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sustain cooperation with United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors. He also urges the international community to continue to support humanitarian efforts.**

56. **The Secretary-General highlights the need for the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to ensure that food is accessible to everyone in all locations of the country, including the most physically vulnerable — women, children, elderly people, people with disabilities or illnesses and those held in detention or prison camps. He also emphasizes the need for the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to extend health services to all without discrimination.**

57. **The Secretary-General is seriously concerned at the lack of tangible progress made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in other respects to safeguard fundamental rights and freedoms. He urges the Government to show visible signs of domestic legal reform so as to fulfil its treaty obligations and to comply with international standards.**

58. **The High Commissioner for Human Rights will continue to work with other United Nations agencies to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights for all nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The High Commissioner will also resume previous efforts to engage in a constructive dialogue with the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with a view to establishing technical cooperation programmes in the field of human rights. In the light of the benefits of such assistance, the Secretary-General appeals to the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to positively consider this offer, which is made in good faith.**

59. **The Secretary-General urges the Government to allow access to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to other special procedures to observe the situation of human rights in the country at first hand, as part of its cooperation with the Human Rights Council.**

60. **The Secretary-General welcomes the submission of the country's combined third and fourth periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and encourages the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to submit other treaty body reports that remain outstanding.**

61. **The Secretary-General also welcomes the positive developments under the six-party talks. He encourages all parties involved to intensify their efforts in the context of the dialogues and sustain the momentum of the process. Furthermore, the Secretary-General calls upon all regional and international actors to facilitate the creation of an environment conducive to generating greater engagement between the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international community. The Secretary-General is hopeful that through gradual cooperation and incremental confidence-building measures, the United Nations will be able to take on a greater role in helping to promote and protect human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.**

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Globalization and interdependence: role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence

Impact of globalization on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

In response to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolution 62/199, the present report addresses the impact of globalization on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The economic forces powering globalization, including trade and cross-border flows of capital and labour, have important economic, social and environmental impacts on countries. The realization of the Millennium Development Goals is dependent on the concerted management of the globalization process by the international community and the strengthening of the global partnership for development. Developmental considerations must be placed at the centre in managing globalization at the national, regional and global levels to ensure that the benefits can percolate to all countries and people.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

** The submission of the present report was delayed to allow for its thorough revision by all relevant United Nations offices and agencies.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	New threats to the internationally agreed development goals	3
	A. Global economic outlook	3
	B. Food crisis	6
III.	Social and environmental impact of globalization	9
	A. Impact of globalization on the eradication of poverty, hunger and education (Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2)	9
	B. Impact of globalization on gender equality (Goal 3)	11
	C. Impact of globalization on health (Goals 4, 5 and 6)	12
	D. Impact of globalization on sustainable development (Goal 7)	15
IV.	Conclusions	17

I. Introduction

1. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 62/199, the present report addresses the impact of globalization on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

2. The relationship between globalization and development outcomes is complex. Each of the forces powering globalization — finance, trade, investment, technology and migration — have economic, social and environmental impacts. They affect the formulation and implementation of policies at the national, regional and global levels. Among significant impacts is the reduction in the degree of national autonomy in policymaking and the resulting need to better harmonize national policy formulation with international obligations, commitments and compulsions. The realization of the Millennium Development Goals is dependent on the strengthening of the global partnership for development (Goal 8). Buffeted by economic forces outside their control, smaller economies cannot succeed by themselves in realizing the goals. Section II of the present report highlights this message in the light of contemporary threats to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals. Section III highlights the social and environmental impact of globalization and focuses on four Millennium Development Goal clusters: poverty, hunger and education; gender equality; health; and sustainable development.

II. New threats to the internationally agreed development goals

A. Global economic outlook

3. The global economic outlook has turned gloomy in recent months. The contagious effects of an economic slowdown in the United States of America and the fragility of financial markets are proving greater than many observers had initially predicted, with other leading advanced economies struggling to offset the consequences of lower export demand and declining consumer and investor confidence.

4. Growth in the developing world, which has built momentum over the past five years, may cushion the world economy from a hard landing. Still, that performance has also relied on strong consumer demand in the United States and surging financial flows that produced a remarkable degree of monetary and exchange rate stability. It is unlikely that those countries will be decoupled from the macrofinancial weaknesses in the advanced economies.

5. At the same time, inflationary pressures, driven by rising food and fuel prices, have begun to squeeze hard on living standards in developed and developing countries alike, complicating the policy response. In recent years, a singular emphasis on targeting inflation has come to dominate debates on macroeconomic policy with strong calls to leave monetary and foreign exchange policies to an independent central bank. However, whatever the specific tools employed and regardless of who controls them, fighting inflation usually leads to higher unemployment, at least in the short run, and the risk of lower investment and growth in the medium term.

6. All this points to a much less supportive environment for meeting the internationally agreed development goals than has been the case since the Millennium Summit. The dilemma facing policymakers in the world's poorest countries is particularly stark given that the recent surge in fuel and food prices will likely lead to a rapid deterioration of income among households, reversing much of the gains made by countries in the area of poverty reduction.

7. Emergency support can ease the threat in the short run, but the only lasting solution is to raise investment and stimulate productivity in the food-producing sector. This will require increased public spending on research and development and significant investment in rural infrastructure, along with improved access to credits to ensure adequate supplies of modern farming inputs. This, in turn, will require that macroeconomic policies give as much priority to investment, employment and economic security as to fighting inflation.

8. The need to embed macroeconomic policies in a broader development strategy is not limited only to the most vulnerable developing countries. Indeed, if general progress in meeting the internationally agreed development goals is to be registered, priority must be given to investment spending in many middle-income countries, particularly in education, health and infrastructure, but also in specific sectors with the greatest potential for employment generation, scale economies and technological upgrading.

9. Since the debt crisis of the early 1980s, a combination of tight macroeconomic policies, privatization, rapid liberalization and deregulation have been presented to developing countries as the only sound policy basis on which to build a healthy investment climate. To date, the expected improvement has not materialized in most countries.

10. In this respect, there is an urgent need to address three interrelated features of the recent boom which have worked to hold back investment and which threaten progress towards meeting the internationally agreed development goals by 2015. First, growth recoveries have not been sufficiently inclusive and have been accompanied by a weak labour market performance and rising levels of inequality; second, strongly procyclical responses to shocks have led to exaggerated boom-bust cycles in many countries and have made it difficult to establish longer-term planning horizons; third, international policy coordination has weakened even as cross-border economic flows have been increasing. Together, these features point to a much more unbalanced process of economic interdependence than is suggested in much of the discussion about the contemporary globalization process.

11. The key feature of globalization is the growing influence of global market forces. Globalization is usually measured by the volume of international trade and flows of capital, migration levels and the overseas holding of assets, including infrastructure. The ever larger numbers attached to those variables are taken not just as indications of a new and encompassing reality, but as a measure of economic success in a globalizing world.

12. An often neglected feature of the current period is the abandonment of earlier arrangements founded on the belief that adverse influences emanating from trade, finance and debt should and could be countered through measures that preserve growth, full employment and development. There is a greater reliance today on market self-regulation. The freeing up of markets promised to unleash the creative

forces of unrestricted competition and risk-taking, as well as ensure that the resulting prosperity would be inclusive and the outcome stable. The deregulation of financial markets, given their supposed informational edge and ability to manage risk, were seen as particularly important for the achievement of more rapid growth.

13. Moves in that direction marked a qualitative change in the direction of the world economy, as the driving force of international integration shifted towards the financial sector. The global stock of financial assets has risen twelvefold since 1980, three times as fast as the global gross domestic product (GDP). The value of daily foreign exchange transactions, which amounted to just $80 billion in 1980, now stands at close to $2,000 billion, which is a growth rate that is six times faster than that of foreign trade. There have been massive two-way financial flows dominated by short-term capital movements in the form of bank lending, equities and bonds. The market for corporate control through cross-border mergers and acquisitions has also mushroomed, and a good deal of direct investment has been in banking, insurance and other financial services.

14. Those trends are closely associated with the rapid liberalization of domestic financial markets and the opening of the external capital account and have had far-reaching implications for the real economy. Episodes of exceptionally rapid economic expansion driven by financial bubbles have brought periods of growing prosperity, but these can end very suddenly in recession or longer periods of slow growth. Sharp swings in asset prices, exchange rates and aggregate demand cause fundamental uncertainty regarding returns on capital and can shorten planning horizons and promote defensive and speculative strategies in investment which can, in turn, exert a significant adverse influence on the pace and pattern of capital accumulation, economic growth and employment.

15. These problems are particularly serious in developing countries in view of their limited scope to pursue effective counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies. Vulnerability to capital flow reversals varies, but in many emerging markets since the late 1970s, financial crises have often been triggered by factors beyond the control of recipient countries, including shifts in monetary and financial policies in the major industrial countries.

16. The volatility and procyclical nature of private capital flows to developing countries explain, in part, why no evidence can be found that such movements of capital have resulted in general in increased investment or higher long-term economic growth during the past three decades. While capital surges stimulated aggregate demand and investment, a large part of the gains were often more than reversed in cases where the sudden halt triggered a financial crisis. Financial volatility has thus translated into increased investment uncertainty and greater volatility in output, both of which are detrimental to long-term economic growth.

17. The procyclical behaviour of finance and the vulnerability of countries to external shocks result in economic insecurity for individuals and households. Episodes of exceptionally rapid economic expansion driven by financial bubbles no doubt can bring greater prosperity than expansions in which finance plays a more passive role. But there are serious questions about how far that prosperity spreads, and whether susceptibility to deeper recessions or longer periods of stagnation do not result in considerable waste of resources of both capital and labour.

18. The problem is particularly serious in many developing countries in view of their limited capacity to pursue effective counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies. Extreme poverty, defined as the lack of resources to meet the daily food needs of individuals, is the most damaging expression of economic insecurity. In many cases, economic growth in recent years has failed to generate rising incomes for the poor. Even those countries that have been growing faster and have showed more stability were not necessarily able to translate growth into poverty reduction. This outcome reflects, in part, the tenuous links among growth, investment and labour market performance in the new economic environment, links which have been further strained by the direction taken by multilateral financial arrangements in that period.

19. Under present arrangements and policies, developing countries almost invariably find themselves obliged to adjust to international imbalances through domestic retrenchment. In direct contrast to those arrangements originally thought to be necessary to support the international trading system, current arrangements favour private capital flows over official flows, exchange rate flexibility over stability, deflationary adjustment over financing and the interests of creditors over debtors. At the same time, the recognition that full employment has to be an integral part of the success of increasingly free trade has been weakened. Efforts to control chronic tendencies to excess supply of certain primary commodities — for example, through the provision of external financing for structural shifts into new activities in developing countries that are excessively dependent on primary commodity exports — have been limited and sporadic. Trade liberalization has also been put in front of economic growth and full employment, thereby rekindling mercantilist agendas, particularly in developed countries.

20. While it is recognized that growth in global interdependence poses greater problems today, the mechanisms and institutions put in place over the past three decades have not enhanced the coherence, complementarity and coordination of global economic policymaking. Multilateral solutions, based on full participation and open dialogue across the international community, remain the best hope for providing a secure economic future for all.

21. This process should begin with reconsideration of the level and terms of access of developing countries to resources of the International Monetary Fund, especially compensatory financing mechanisms to cope with external shocks. It is also important to end the tendency to impose procyclical macroeconomic conditionality at higher access levels. Improved surveillance will also need to take on board all possible spillovers, with policies in the advanced countries remaining key.

B. Food crisis

22. The World Bank reports an 83 per cent rise in global food prices over the past three years, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations cites a 45 per cent increase in their world food price index during the past nine months. The rapid and simultaneous rise in world prices for all basic food crops — corn (maize), wheat, soybeans and rice — along with other food items, such as cooking oils, is having a devastating effect on poor people all over the world. With increased hunger and malnutrition, the young, old, infirm and other vulnerable groups will die prematurely or be harmed in other ways.

23. Even before the recent spike in food prices, almost 1 billion people were suffering from chronic hunger, while over 2 billion were experiencing malnutrition, bringing the total number of food-insecure people to over 3 billion, or almost half the world's population. The recent sharp increases in food prices have driven the number of people vulnerable to food stress even higher, with over 100 million likely to be chronically hungry. Even before the price spikes, an average of 18,000 children a day were dying as a direct or indirect consequence of malnutrition (Associated Press, 18 February 2007). Concerted efforts are needed to ensure food security if developing countries are to meet their goals in the reduction of hunger.

24. Sharp increases in food prices and the global discontent provoked therefrom have led to the pinning of blame on a few factors, including increased demand from fast-growing emerging economies; lower global supplies; the flow of speculative capital into commodity markets; decline in farm production; bad weather in key food-producing countries; rising costs for fuel and fertilizer; and diversion to biofuels. With sharp increases in oil prices over the past 12 months,[1] the higher cost of transporting food commodities has been passed on to the consumer. High food prices are also tied to a host of resource scarcity issues, notably climate change and water depletion. In its fourth assessment report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projected that the effects of climate change would increase the number of undernourished people by between 40 to 170 million. Droughts, floods and freezing weather due to climate change are expected to continue to hurt agricultural output and therefore food security. Water scarcity is also increasingly dire, as groundwater and freshwater resources are being depleted to produce water-intensive food commodities, such as biofuels, beef and grain.

25. However, the recent dramatic rise in global food prices is not the result of any specific climatic shock or other emergency, but rather of the cumulative effects of long-term trends and more recent factors, including supply and demand dynamics and responses which have caused further price increases and higher price volatility.[2] While much emphasis has been placed on the immediate and short-term causes affecting food supplies and prices, it is also important to consider structural causes and the impact of policies over the last few decades. One key long-term structural cause of the current rise in food prices is the decline in support for investment in agricultural productivity. Despite evidence that links positive growth and poverty reduction effects with investment in agriculture, spending on farming as a share of total public spending in developing countries fell by half between 1980 and 2004, and was especially severe in sub-Saharan Africa. Public spending on agriculture as a share of agricultural GDP was just 4.2 per cent in the least developed countries in 2004, less than half the level in other developing countries (10.7 per cent).[3]

26. Having neglected food security and the productive sectors of their economies for several decades, the Governments of many developing countries now also lack the fiscal capacity to increase public spending to increase food production and agricultural productivity. The problem has been exacerbated by the significant drop in official development assistance for agricultural development in developing countries. Official development assistance to the sector decreased in real terms by

[1] Gideon Rachman, "The battle for food, oil and water", *The Guardian*, 26 January 2008.

[2] Comprehensive Framework for Action, High-level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, 2008.

[3] *The Least Developed Countries Report, 2008*, UNCTAD, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.II.D.20, page 90.

nearly half between 1980 and 2005. The share of official development assistance to agriculture fell from about 17 per cent in the early 1980s to a low of 3 per cent in 2005.[4] Agricultural research and development has fallen for all crops in all developing countries, while cuts in agricultural research continue. All this has adversely affected research on crops and pests, as well as agricultural extension programmes to help farmers adopt improved farming methods.

27. Another important factor has been trade liberalization. Agricultural trade liberalization was meant to help developing nations generate export earnings, increase the market share for their small farmers and make food cheaper for consumers. Removing or lowering import barriers and other limits on agricultural imports has taken away the ability of developing countries to manage the inflow of agricultural imports. Cheap and subsidized farm imports from developed countries have made subsistence farming in the developing world uncompetitive and unsustainable. Thus, developing countries have turned to importing large quantities of food which directly threatens their food security and agricultural sustainability. The agricultural trade balance has worsened since the mid-1990s, particularly for the least developed countries, as a high number of producers in those countries have found it difficult in the wake of trade liberalization to compete in their own markets for many key foodstuffs.[5]

28. Production subsidies and protection for agriculture in developed countries are undermining food production, security and exports of developing countries. Agricultural subsidies and protection not only promote overproduction, which may result in the overuse of water, fertilizer and pesticides in developed countries, but also discourage and limit the scope for profitable modernization of agriculture in developing countries. Food security should be a key development outcome of the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations.

29. In the wake of the current food crisis, the food security paradigm needs to shift back to policies that emphasize local food production and invigorate the agricultural sector, particularly in developing countries. Apart from emergency responses, including assistance in the form of food aid and the development of national safety nets for the poor and vulnerable, all countries need to take steps including:

(a) *Increased funding for agriculture*: policies that help countries develop their own agricultural sectors actually feed more people and decrease developing countries' dependence on food imports in the long run. Also, addressing agricultural development in poor countries is an opportunity for alleviating poverty, as many of the poorest are still dependent on agriculture for income and jobs;

(b) *Increased support for small farmers*: tackling hunger requires that small farmers in developing countries are given support in order to better provide for their own populations. Subsistence farmers constitute 75 per cent of the world's poor. Development policies should promote the consumption and production of local crops raised on small, sustainable farms;

(c) *Ensure policy space for developing countries to protect their agricultural sectors*: there are significant imbalances between the agricultural sectors of

[4] Lidia Cabral, "Funding Agriculture: Not 'how much?' but 'what for?'", Overseas Development Institute, October 2007.

[5] *The Least Developed Countries Report, 2008*, UNCTAD, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.II.D.20, page 65.

developed and low-income countries which need to be addressed. In the light of the current crisis, there is a need for reviews of many of the free trade agreements between developed and developing countries. Developing countries that have signed or are negotiating free trade agreements need to ensure that such agreements provide enough policy space to safeguard food security, farmers' livelihoods and rural development. Some government intervention is also required through the protection of and improvement in access to land, the provision of seeds and fertilizer, the development of farm credit programmes, institutions for storage and marketing as well as national food stocks, all of which are essential to mitigate the effects of fluctuations of national food production on producers and consumers.

More recently, rising energy prices and heightened concerns about climate change have also contributed to the hike in food price. Both those factors have led to the rapidly growing demand for biofuels. Diversion of land and other resources to biofuel production seems to have had an impact on food prices. To address this situation, it is proposed that:

(i) Policies to promote biofuel production should ensure that it is done in the most efficient manner and is consistent with food security and environmental sustainability;

(ii) Countries should pursue second-generation biofuels, obtained from plant residue and animal waste, that can minimize the emissions associated with certain current biofuels.

Every country and all people have the right to live in dignity, free from hunger. These are merely a few recommendations that can help turn the tide against the growing food crisis and help ensure the food sovereignty of developing nations. Environmentally sustainable agriculture and bioenergy policies that ensure food and energy sovereignty also need to be supported.

III. Social and environmental impact of globalization

30. For the purpose of the present report, the Millennium Development Goals have been grouped together in four clusters — poverty, hunger and education (Goals 1 and 2); gender equality and the empowerment of women (Goal 3); health (Goals 4, 5 and 6); and sustainable development (Goal 7). Each cluster focuses on some implications of globalization, which are by no means exhaustive.

A. Impact of globalization on the eradication of poverty, hunger and education (Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2)

31. In the past half decade, the global economy has recorded robust growth. While this has played a critical role in lifting millions out of poverty, the impact was uneven. Moreover, rapid growth has had varied impacts. For example, rapid economic growth by the least developed countries, has not reduced poverty significantly. The benefits have been unevenly distributed, leading to increased inequality within and across countries. Significant poverty reduction requires a combination of higher growth and more pro-poor distribution of the gains from growth.

32. One way in which globalization has an impact on poverty is through its net effect on jobs, as new global supply chains are established and maintained over time. In addition to being an important end in itself, employment and decent work are key to eradicating poverty. Three aspects of the relationship between globalization and employment stand out. The inadequate availability of productive jobs is now a worldwide phenomenon. Moreover, global forces, such as trade and cross-border flows of capital and labour, now have important consequences for employment in individual countries. Finally, international commitments as well as rules and policies set outside a country's geographical borders — especially macroeconomic and fiscal policies and those pertaining to foreign investment and aid — are now almost as important as national policies for expanding opportunities for productive employment in developing countries, where most of the world's workers live and will live.

33. Of the world's 3.1 billion workers, 73 per cent live in developing countries while only 14 per cent live in developed countries. The rest live in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, oil-rich countries and other high-income countries. In the near future some 46 million new workers will be joining the world's labour force every year, the bulk of them in developing countries.[6] While the world's labour force is concentrated in developing countries, its capital, technologies and skills are concentrated in advanced industrial countries. The global employment situation reflects this huge asymmetry in the distribution of the world's productive resources. Millions of workers in the developing world are seriously underemployed and engaged in extremely low-productivity survival activities. Even in advanced industrial countries, and countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, there are large numbers of people who are unemployed, or whose employment is precarious as well as workers who are discouraged and have given up searching for elusive jobs.

34. In developing countries, the employment problem manifests itself not in high unemployment but in the high incidence of underemployment which is obscured in self-employment and casual wage employment outside the formal sector. Poverty is rooted in this kind of employment situation, with the poor remaining outside the formal sector. In this context, improving the employment situation often reduces poverty and generally occurs in two different ways. First, when formal sector employment grows faster than the labour force, some of the self-employed and casual workers move into full-time and more productive jobs. Second, when government policies successfully direct investment to the informal sector, the underemployment of some of the self-employed and casual workers declines as their productivity and income increase.

35. Meeting the employment challenge facing the developing world calls for a reduction of the asymmetry in the cross-country distribution of productive resources that currently exists and a supportive environment for sustained economic growth that generates jobs. Countries need to reorient their growth strategies and labour policies to pursue explicit employment objectives in order to achieve reduction in poverty. In developing countries, labour market regulations and institutions must be geared towards creating labour-intensive jobs. Employment growth in the formal

[6] Ajit K. Ghose, Nomaan Majid and Christoph Ernst, "The Global Employment Challenge", ILO, 30 April 2008.

sector and the expansion of basic social protection to workers in the informal sector should be pursued simultaneously in order to create decent jobs that will lift people out of poverty. National policies in developed countries need to focus on helping those who have lost their industrial jobs adapt to new service-related jobs and on adjusting social protection systems to meet the challenges workers face in labour markets that have become more flexible with globalization and liberalization.

36. Universal primary education and the completion of basic education are also the first steps towards a system of lifelong learning for all citizens, which is as relevant for the poorest countries as for the wealthiest. In a globally integrated and highly competitive world economy, no country can still consider primary schooling a terminal level of education for its labour force.

37. Globalization, combined with increased access to and use of information and communications technologies, has increased the importance of knowledge as a major driver of growth. Most developing and transition countries continue to wrestle with difficulties stemming from inadequate responses to long-standing problems facing their educational systems. There is a need to develop a holistic education system based on a comprehensive approach to resource allocation. The role of Governments is thus critical in establishing institutions capable of providing high-quality secondary and tertiary education, including developing a clear vision for the long-term development of a comprehensive, diversified and well-articulated tertiary education system.

B. Impact of globalization on gender equality (Goal 3)

38. The relationship between globalization and gender equality is complex. Significant gender differences and disparities prevail with respect to economic participation and returns to the labour force. Globalization has encouraged greater deregulation. In many instances, Governments have proceeded with such deregulation without measures in place to ensure social protection for those most likely to suffer negative impacts resulting in increased risks for many social groups, including women. It is necessary to monitor and balance the gender differentiated impacts of globalization so that gender equality can be achieved.

39. Perhaps one of the most significant impacts of globalization on gender equality is its impact on women's employment. Industrialization has increased employment opportunities for women, increasing the number of them with decent jobs, for example in East Asia. Empirical studies suggest a direct link between export growth and female employment in labour-intensive manufacturing, where the proportion of women workers tends to be comparatively large. For example, increased exports were associated with increased female employment in countries such as Mauritius, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia and the "East Asian Tigers".[7] In many of those export-oriented economies, women workers are segregated in low-skill, low-income jobs in the manufacturing sector. But gender disparities in wages persist. For instance, with industrialization, the employment of women as well as their wages have increased, but mostly in export-oriented industries, such as apparel and

[7] Stephanie Seguino, "Accounting for Gender in Asian Economic Growth", Feminist Economics 6(3): 27-58.

information and communications technologies.[8] In sub-Saharan Africa, the female employment-to-population ratios are the second highest in the world, behind East Asia but for other reasons. The Latin American and Caribbean region has also witnessed a decrease in the gender gap and an increase in women's participation in the labour force.

40. Similarly, the growth of the service sector and the outsourcing of ICT-related jobs from developed to developing countries have provided work opportunities for women. Women in those industries are concentrated in low-skilled jobs, such as data processing or telephone operators, rather than in managerial or skilled positions.[9] However, the scarcity of wage data disaggregated by sex makes a complete assessment of gender wage gaps difficult.

41. Education, particularly primary education, is a powerful driver for the realization of all the Millennium Development Goals. Universal access to basic education is correlated with lower poverty and inequality and economic growth. Greater access to education for girls and their retention in school have strong positive impacts on the health of infants, children and mothers, immunization rates, family nutrition and the attainment of education by subsequent generations. Investment in the education of girls and women, encouraging them in the sciences and engineering, and creating institutions that cater to women are necessary as important steps to change the attitudes of society towards women.

42. Sex disaggregated and other statistics that capture the different realities of women and men can provide the basis for a sound analysis of the impact of globalization on gender disparities and help monitor changes in the status of women and men in societies at the global, national, community, household and individual levels. Gender-sensitive statistics are vital tools for effectively incorporating gender perspectives into national development strategies and providing evidence on the different economic, sociocultural and political factors that shape the lives of women and men. Owing to a lack of such data, it is difficult to analyse the impact of globalization on women.

43. The development and expansion of the use of data disaggregated by sex and gender-sensitive indicators in national and international monitoring frameworks is needed to accurately measure, assess and track the impact of globalization on gender equality to develop national development strategies and budgets that adequately respond to gender-related needs and to track the effectiveness of investments on reducing gender inequality.

C. Impact of globalization on health (Goals 4, 5 and 6)

44. The implications of globalization on health are vast and complex. The increased movement of people and goods associated with globalization has contributed to the spread of communicable diseases and associated increases in risks to human security. Throughout history, health threats have swept across continents

[8] Ibid., and Stephanie Seguino, "Gender Inequality and Economic Growth: A Cross-Country Analysis", World Development 28(7): 1211-30.

[9] Women 2000 and beyond: gender equality and empowerment of women through information and communications technologies, Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, September 2008.

irrespective of national borders. In the twenty-first century, diseases, such as HIV and tuberculosis, can spread even more rapidly across national borders and affect communities worldwide. Also, international migration and trade and social and economic crises contribute to health insecurity and the spread of disease across borders. Globalization is also seen as a major factor contributing to changing lifestyles and epidemics of non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes. Health problems associated with tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol have reached alarming levels in low- and middle-income countries, where the trends are changing fast against a background of urbanization and socio-economic determinants. In 2005, 60 per cent of global deaths were attributed to non-communicable diseases, 80 per cent of which occurred in low- and middle-income countries. The World Health Organization estimates that the highest increases in death rates from non-communicable diseases over the next 10 years will occur in Africa (27 per cent), followed by the eastern Mediterranean region (25 per cent). Moreover, factors related to the production and distribution of foods have recently led to a major food security crisis, which is positing a significant threat to economic and political stability in low-income countries, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

45. Another negative effect of globalization is the exodus of health workers from developing countries in all areas of primary health care, notably nurses and midwives, the front-line workers who provide mothers, infants and children with health services. Ensuring skilled attendance at all births by professional midwives, combined with effective referral to facilities in case of complication, have been fundamental in most countries that have succeeded in reducing maternal and infant mortality and morbidity. Yet, in many sub-Saharan African countries, less than 25 per cent of the human resources needed for obstetric care are available.

46. Lower trade tariffs may have reduced the price of medical equipment and products, but greater patent protection has had the converse effect. Progress continues to be made in increasing the availability to developing regions of a few essential drugs at lower prices as a result of efforts by national Governments, donors, the private sector and others. Since 2001, the World Trade Organization agreement on aspects of trade-related intellectual property rights supports countries' right to safeguard public health and promote access to medicines for all. A decision made by the World Trade Organization in 2003 has eased restrictions on the importation of generic drugs by the poorest countries for the treatment of rapidly spreading diseases, such as AIDS, malaria and drug-resistant tuberculosis.

47. Global cooperation is also bringing faster action against global health threats. There has been substantial acceleration in the past decade in expanding access to prevention and treatment interventions for some major public health threats, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and childhood immunization. However, much more remains to be done since there is far to go. However, access to antiretroviral medicines does not mean easier access to essential medicines more generally. The number of people receiving antiretroviral therapy increased from just under 1 million in 2005 to 3 million people, out of the 6.5 million people who needed such therapy at the end of 2007. Although the price of generic versions has dropped precipitously, the cost of these drugs continues to be high. Moreover, considerable obstacles to treatment for other major infectious diseases remain. For instance, making the drugs available to those most in need — in settings with weak

health systems and limited capacity for distribution — remains a daunting task. For example, global public health is at risk when only a small proportion of the nearly .5 million people falling ill with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis each year have access to effective quality treatment. Far more needs to be done to further scale up the good practices that prevent the emergence of drug-resistant tuberculosis.

48. At present, the following key challenges, which will require practical solutions, lie ahead. First, all development partners will need to help strengthen and support national health policies and plans as the basis for providing assistance and funding and to avoid introducing new plans or projects inconsistent with national health plans and priorities. Without more efficient and equitable health systems, countries will not be able to effectively implement the disease prevention, care and control programmes required to meet the specific health goals of reducing child and maternal mortality and reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Inequitable health systems are not responsive to the needs of the poor.

49. The second challenge is to ensure that health is prioritized within overall development and economic policies. Policymakers have to look beyond the health sector and address the broad determinants of ill health — low levels of education, poverty, unequal gender relations, high-risk behaviours, such as substance dependence and intravenous drug use, prostitution and multiple partners, and an unhealthy environment — besides raising the profile of health national poverty reduction and government reform processes.

50. The third challenge is to further develop health strategies that respond to the diverse and evolving needs of countries while enhancing sustainable primary-care-based health systems. The design and implementation of cost-effective interventions are of great importance in reducing or, if possible, eliminating diseases which have become major burdens at present or will become so in the future.

51. The fourth challenge is to mobilize more resources for health in poor countries. Allocations of aid for health have increased more than for any other purpose, and there is large-scale resource mobilization through private donors. Yet, at present, low-income countries cannot afford to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and aid is not filling the gap.

52. The fifth challenge is to improve the quality of health data. Monitoring country progress towards the Millennium Development Goals is a key responsibility of national Governments, and global level monitoring is one of the most important functions performed by the United Nations system at present. Such monitoring is instrumental in informing global and national policymakers. There are major opportunities ahead to improve the routine collection and use of health data for problem-solving and health promotion at the local level, as well as increasing global capacity to confront the spread of disease and plan for global health advancement.

53. The Millennium Development Goals have helped to focus international attention on and to mobilize much-needed resources for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and for childhood immunization. In addition, Goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals recognizes that there are other major diseases which affect at least 1 billion people. These include Buruli ulcer, Chagas' disease, elephantiasis (lymphatic filariasis), schistosomiasis, intestinal parasites, guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis), leprosy, leishmaniasis, sleeping sickness (human African trypanosomiasis), river blindness (onchocerciasis), trachoma and others. They are

currently called the neglected tropical diseases because of the lack of both international attention to and resources for them. Those diseases thrive in resource-poor settings and tend to affect the poor and marginalized groups. Most at risk are those living in remote areas, conflict zones or urban slums — with little or no access to health care, clean water or other services. Illness and disability caused by the neglected tropical diseases have tremendous social and economic impacts. Fortunately, many of the diseases can be controlled using low-cost technologies that are safe, rapidly effective and easy to administer in resource-poor settings. When applied on a large scale, control strategies can interrupt transmission, helping reduce the risk of onward infection for a limited time. Population-wide interventions (such as mass drug administration and vector control) do not discriminate between the poor and the non-poor, reducing the risk that excluded groups are further marginalized. Efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals should further include intensified control of neglected tropical diseases. This approach could contribute directly to the reduction of the burden of communicable diseases and indirectly to efforts to reduce poverty and hunger.

D. Impact of globalization on sustainable development (Goal 7)

54. Globalization has unleashed strong forces that work both for and against sustainable development, based on the balanced integration of economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Cleaner production technologies and eco-efficient management strategies have become more accessible through open markets, trade and investment. The Internet and other information and communications technologies are being used to share information about our complex global environment, enabling scientists to further understand the environment and giving policymakers an improved scientific basis to frame collective action.

55. Meanwhile, rapid industrialization and integration into the global economy have often been at the expense of resource depletion and environmental degradation. Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and growing demand have put greater pressures on the natural resource base, including the climate and ecosystems. Such pressure on the environment will, in turn, have an impact on the globalization process. According to the Stern Review,[10] with global warming of 5°C-6°C, existing models that consider the risk of abrupt and large-scale climate change estimate an average 5-10 per cent loss in global GDP, with poor countries suffering costs in excess of 10 per cent of GDP.

56. The rapid expansion of global commerce in natural resources, such as timber, minerals and other raw materials, is putting ecosystems in some of the most biologically diverse places on Earth increasingly under threat. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2005, 60 per cent of the ecosystem is currently being used in an unsustainable manner. Those populations which are dependent on the extraction of natural resources, or on natural systems and ecosystem services, could lose their livelihoods and will need assistance to make the transition to alternative activities. However, the implication extends beyond those who are

[10] Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change: Executive Summary (available at http://www.sternreview.org.uk).

directly dependent on the natural resources as means of livelihood, since the broader population also depends on the services provided by the ecosystem.

57. Unregulated domestic and foreign direct investment in forestry and agriculture can lead to deforestation and unsustainable harvesting practices. The proportion of the land area covered by forests, the first indicator to measure progress on Millennium Development Goal 7, can serve as a good proxy for environmental health. Forests contribute significantly to agricultural landscapes and provide some food directly. Forests provide watershed protection and prevent soil erosion, ensuring the integrity of agricultural lands. In addition, forests provide innumerable ecological services. Rapid deforestation can thus hinder agricultural productivity.

58. Markets fail to recognize the full value of natural ecosystems, and there are not enough effective institutional mechanisms to reconcile the profit motive and the currently uncompensated services provided by forests, especially in developing countries. The commercialization of environmental services — such as watershed protection, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation — is an emerging market that harnesses growing global demand for improved environmental management. More accessible and affordable technologies are needed to support the development of agricultural production systems that build and enhance a range of ecosystem services in developing countries.

59. Policies and measures to harness the forces of globalization for promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns should be promoted, including:

(a) Strengthening technology transfer commitments under multilateral environmental agreements and providing more favourable terms for technology transfer under multilateral trade agreements to assist developing countries in their implementation of sustainable production methods;

(b) Increasing bilateral and multilateral assistance and forging new public-private partnerships aimed at building the capacities of developing countries to finance and further develop eco-business, environmental technologies and services;

(c) Restructuring environmentally friendly taxation and phasing out harmful subsidies to reflect their environmental impacts.

60. As the world becomes predominantly urban, managing urbanization will become all the more important for sustainable development. With half the world's population living in urban areas, cities already account for 75 per cent of energy consumption and generate 80 per cent of all waste including greenhouse gas emissions. Globalization also promotes urbanization, as it uses cities as centres for trade and investment. Urbanization also changes the way and intensity with which people use land, water, energy and other natural resources, making target 10 under Millennium Development Goal 7 (on access to safe drinking water) more challenging to achieve, while also presenting opportunities for taking measures to save certain types of energy use, such as with the provision of mass transit.

61. The attainment of the internationally agreed development goals will increasingly depend on policy responses to the consequences of rapid urbanization and globalization. Under prevailing policy frameworks, which fall short of acknowledging urban poverty and urban slums, living conditions in slums will diminish the effectiveness of most sectoral approaches and interventions to poverty reduction, hunger and malnutrition, health and education, and women's

empowerment. The spatial and physical characteristics of urban poverty and of slums require holistic approaches, which only a handful of countries have adopted. The urbanization of poverty and slum formation requires approaches that address the sectoral issues of poverty, health, education and employment within a holistic urban planning framework.

62. National sustainable development strategies play an important role in pursuing integrated development combining economic, social and environmental objectives. Over 70 countries have elaborated and are implementing national sustainable development strategies. As an interactive and iterative process of planning, participation and action, national sustainable development strategies are intended to institutionalize processes for consultation, negotiation, mediation and consensus-building on priority issues where interests may differ in managing progress towards sustainability goals.

63. More serious consideration should be given to the use of voluntary, multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives in improving the quality of implementation of sustainable development goals and commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals. Advancing and mainstreaming the partnership-based approach to development has become more pressing in view of the challenges resulting from an increasingly interdependent world, thus making partnerships useful to catalyse actions and mobilize additional resources and expertise that Governments, civil society and private sector alone may not be able to assemble as efficiently and effectively. The effective use of partnerships could offer developed and developing countries a more participatory approach, increased ownership and leadership, solidarity and mutual accountability in the design, implementation and evaluation of appropriate development initiatives and international cooperation frameworks.

IV. Conclusions

64. **Global forces, such as trade and cross-border flows of capital and labour, have important consequences for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Development must therefore be placed at the centre in considering how globalization is managed, rather than viewing it as a by-product of globalization.**

65. **Given the nature of linkages and interdependence in driving globalization and its cumulative impact on growth and development, greater consistency must be achieved among the macroeconomic, trade, aid, financial, environmental and gender equality policies of all countries, so that all support the common aim of making globalization work for all. More efforts at the international level are needed to establish fair and equitable trade, investment, technology and knowledge regimes. Multilateral institutions and global governance need to be reformed. Ensuring the greater participation of developing countries is essential in the decision-making processes of international institutions so that their needs in managing globalization are fairly represented and addressed at the international level.**

66. **The impact of globalization at the country level is determined by a variety of factors, including the degree of openness of the economy, the institutional strengths of various countries, their level of human development, their ability to manage volatility with appropriate counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies**

and their capacity to make inroads into dynamic manufacturing and services sectors. Domestic resources and institutions must be strengthened and mobilized to ensure that a development strategy serves to advance the objectives and priorities of national development agendas and to enable country-specific responses to global trends and impacts. Safety nets and social protection schemes that shelter the assets of the poor during crises should be given high priority. Statistics, including data disaggregated by sex and gender-sensitive indicators, need to be improved to provide the basis for sound analysis of the impact of globalization on development. Monitoring and evaluation capacity must be strengthened to ensure that policies are well targeted.

67. **On balance, globalization has unleashed a wide array of opportunities as well as new problems for realizing the internationally agreed development goals. A number of developing countries have made major inroads in reducing poverty and hunger by taking advantage of those opportunities and safeguarding against potential threats. The principal challenge is to ensure that all countries and all people benefit from the positive potential of globalization.**

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Sixty-third session
Item 91 of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

Note by the Secretary-General

By its resolution 61/89, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, and to transmit the report of the group of experts to the Assembly for consideration at its sixty-third session. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

08-49110 (E) 170908

Report of the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

Summary

The present report was prepared by the Group of Governmental Experts, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/89, to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

The Group noted that there were different motivations for conventional arms production and acquisition, and that the weapons being traded on the illicit market most often started out as legally traded weapons. In the light of the complexity of the issues inherent to the conventional arms transfers, the Group concluded that further consideration of those issues was required and that such efforts should be carried out, on a step-by-step basis, in an open and transparent manner, within the framework of the United Nations.

Acknowledging the need to prevent the diversion of conventional arms from the legal market into the illicit market, the Group stressed the need for all States to ensure that their national systems and internal controls are at the highest possible standards. It encouraged those States in a position to do so, to render assistance to States in need, upon request.

Contents

		Page
	Foreword by the Secretary-General	4
	Letter of transmittal	5
I.	Introduction	11
II.	Background	12
III.	Trends in the international arms trade	13
IV.	Feasibility of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms	13
V.	Scope of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms	14
VI.	Draft parameters of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms	15
VII.	Conclusions and recommendations	16

Foreword by the Secretary-General

In 1997, a group of Nobel Peace Prize laureates from different regions and with varied histories published a compelling drive for a global arms trade treaty. They voiced their common concern regarding the destructive effects of the unregulated arms trade and advocated the adoption of an International code of conduct on arms transfers which, once adopted by all arms-selling nations, would benefit all humanity, nationalities, ethnicities, and religions (http://www.armstradetreaty.com/att/laureates.php). Since then, there has been growing recognition that, in order to safeguard international peace and security, there is an urgent need to further address the conventional arms trade.

I was, therefore, particularly gratified when on 6 December 2006, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 61/89, by which it recognized that the absence of common international standards on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms was a contributory factor to conflict, the displacement of people, crime and terrorism, thereby undermining peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable development.

I was equally heartened when, by the same resolution, the General Assembly requested me to seek the views of Member States on the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. It is worth mentioning that more than 100 Member States submitted their views, most of which argued for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

The General Assembly also requested me to establish a group of governmental experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. I am truly encouraged by the result of the work of the Group.

While fully cognizant of the complex and intricate nature of this subject, I am pleased to note the outcome of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts whereby it deems it necessary that further consideration of the issue should be carried out within the United Nations. I wish to express my appreciation to the members of the Group for completing their work and I commend their report to the General Assembly for its consideration.

Letter of transmittal dated 8 August 2008, from the Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/89 to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The list of members of the Group which you appointed pursuant to operative paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 61/98 comprised the following experts:

Algeria

Mr. Youcef **Benmedakhene** (First session)
National Focal Point for Conventional Arms
Algiers

Mr. Larbi **El Hadj Ali** (Second and third sessions)
Minister Plenipotentiary
Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations
New York

Argentina

H.E. Mr. Roberto **García Moritán**
Secretary of Foreign Affairs
Buenos Aires

Australia

Mr. Bryce **Hutchesson**
Special Adviser
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
c/o Australian Embassy
Washington, D.C.

Brazil

H.E. Mr. José **Viegas**
Ambassador of Brazil to the Kingdom of Spain
Madrid

Mr. Carlos Luís Dantas Coutinho **Perez** (Alternate)
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations
New York

China

Mr. Jun'an **Zhang**
Division Director
Department of Arms Control and Disarmament
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Beijing

Colombia

Mr. José Nicolás **Rivas de Zubiría** (First session)
Director for Multilateral Political Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bogotá

Mrs. Betty **Escorcia** (Second and third sessions)
Minister Plenipotentiary
Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations
New York

Costa Rica

Mr. Luis Alberto **Cordero Arias**
Executive Director of the Arias Foundation for Peace
and Human Progress
San José

Cuba

Lt. Col. José Rufino **Menéndez Hernández** (Second and third sessions)
Director of the Centre for Disarmament and
International Security (CEDSI)
Havana

Mr. Rodolfo Benitez **Versón** (First session)
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations
New York

Egypt

Mr. Hossam Eldeen **Aly**
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations
New York

Finland

H.E. Mr. Kari **Kahiluoto** (First and third sessions)
Permanent Representative of Finland
to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva

Ms. Outi **Holopainen** (Second session)
Director for Unit for Arms Control
Non-Proliferation and Disarmament
Political Department
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Helsinki

France

Mr. Jean-Marie **Magnien**
Diplomatic adviser to the French Chief of Defence
Paris

Germany

H.E. Mr. Bernhard **Brasack**
Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva

India

Mr. Dharmendra **Gaddam** (First and second sessions)
Director, Disarmament and International
Security Affairs
Ministry of External Affairs
New Delhi

Dr. Anupam **Ray** (Third Session)
Counsellor Permanent Mission of India to
the United Nations
New York

Indonesia

Dr. Desra **Percaya** (First and third sessions)
Director for International Security and Disarmament
Department of Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Indonesia
Jakarta

Mr. Febrian Alphyanto **Ruddyard** (Second session)
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia
to the United Nations
New York

Italy

Mr. Paolo **Cuculi**
First Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations
New York

Japan

Ms. Keiko **Yanai**
Senior Deputy Director
Conventional Arms Division, Disarmament,
Non-proliferation and Science Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tokyo

Kenya

H.E. Mr. Philip Richard O. **Owade**
Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya
to the United Nations
Geneva

Mexico

H.E. Mr. Joel **Hernández**
Legal Adviser
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mexico City

Dr. Roberto **Dondisch** (Alternate) (Third session)
Adviser to the Vice Minister for Multilateral Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mexico City

Nigeria

Ms. Maria O. **Laose**
Director, First United Nations Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Abuja

Pakistan

H.E. Mr. Tariq Osman **Hyder**
Member of the Oversight Board for Strategic Export Controls,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Islamabad, and
Visiting Professor for Strategic Studies
National Defence University of Pakistan
Islamabad

Romania

Mr. Paul **Pasnicu**
Director, Conventional Arms Division
National Agency for Export Controls (ANCEX)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania
Bucharest

Russian Federation

H.E. Mr. Anatoliy **Antonov**
Director of the Department for Security and Disarmament
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Moscow

South Africa

Ms. Talent Dumisile Georgina **Molaba**
Director, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
Department of Foreign Affairs
Pretoria

Spain

Mr. Angel **Lossada Torres-Quevedo** (First session)
Director-General for International Affairs
of Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Madrid

Mr. Ignacio **Sánchez de Lerín García-Ovies** (Second session)
Deputy Director-General for Non-Proliferation
and Disarmament
General Department for Strategic Affairs and Terrorism
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
Madrid

Ms. Carmen **Buján** (Third session)
Director-General of Strategical Affairs and Terrorism
Madrid

Mr. Ramón **Muro** (Alternate) (Third session)
Assistant Director-General of Foreign Trade of Defence
and Dual-Use Material
Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade
Madrid

Switzerland

Mr. Erwin **Bollinger**
Head of Division
Federal Department of Economic Affairs (FDEA)
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
Bilateral Economic Relations
Export Control and Sanctions
Berne

Ukraine

Ms. Zoia **Oliinyk**
Counsellor of the Arms control and Technical
and Military Cooperation
Directorate-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Kiev

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

H.E. Mr. John S. **Duncan**
Ambassador for Multilateral Arms Control
and Disarmament
Geneva

Mr. Andrew **Wood** (Alternate)
Head of Export Control Policy
Ministry of Defence
London

United States of America

H.E. Mr. Donald A. **Mahley**
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Threat Reduction,
Export Controls and Negotiation
Bureau of International Security and Non-proliferation
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Mr. William **Malzahn** (Alternate)
Acting Director
Office of Conventional Arms Threat Reduction
Bureau of International Security and Non-proliferation,
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.

The report of the Group was prepared between February and August 2008, during which time the Group held three sessions in New York: the first from 11 to 15 February, the second from 12 to 16 May and the third and last session from 28 July to 8 August.

Participation was very active and the discussions were held in a frank and cordial manner. A number of experts submitted non-papers which enriched the discussions.

The members of the Group wish to express their appreciation for the assistance they received from members of the Secretariat of the United Nations, in particular, Pamela Maponga, who served as Secretary of the Group and Rachel Stohl, who served as consultant to the Group.

The Group is also grateful to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio de Queiroz Duarte, for his support.

I have been requested by the Group of Governmental Experts, as its Chairman, to submit to you, on its behalf, the present report which was approved by consensus.

(*Signed*) Roberto **García Moritán**
Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/89 to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

I. Introduction

1. On 6 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/89 entitled "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms". By operative paragraph 2 of that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, informed by the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, to examine, commencing in 2008, the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, and to transmit the report of the group of experts to the Assembly for consideration at its sixty-third session.

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General established a Group of Governmental Experts comprising experts from the following countries: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Group, which was chaired by Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, met in three sessions, all of which were held in 2008, at United Nations Headquarters, from 11 to 15 February, 12 to 16 May and 28 July to 8 August, respectively.

3. The work of the Group was largely informed by the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/278 (Parts I and II) and Adds. 1-4), prepared pursuant to operative paragraph 1 of resolution 61/89, whereby the General Assembly requested him to seek the views of Member States on the feasibility scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session. A total of 101 Member States and 2 regional organizations, namely the Caribbean Community and the European Union, submitted their views to the Secretary-General. The report of the Secretary-General can also be found on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (http://disarmament.un.org/cab/ATT/index.html).

4. The Group of Governmental Experts also benefited from two studies published by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. One focused on an Analysis of States' Views on an Arms Trade Treaty and the other on Implications of States' Views on an arms trade treaty.[1]

5. The Group also benefited from a study prepared by the consultant, Rachel Stohl, on a number of existing subregional, regional, and international instruments, arrangements and/or documents that aim at regulating the international conventional arms trade or enhancing transparency. The Group welcomed a presentation made by the Secretary of the 2006 Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development, Nazir Kamal. While considering the above-mentioned presentations, a variety of views was also expressed.

[1] See http://www.unidir.ch/pdf/ouvrages/pdf-1-92-9045-008-A-en.pdf and www.unidir.ch/pdf/ouvrages/pdf-1-92-9045-008-B-en.pdf, respectively.

II. Background

6. Since the establishment of the United Nations, various United Nations bodies, including the General Assembly and its special sessions devoted to disarmament, the Security Council and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, have adopted numerous resolutions, guidelines and decisions related to conventional arms transfers, in accordance with States' obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, in order to promote international peace and security.

7. The United Nations has adopted two instruments aimed at promoting transparency on military matters and conventional arms transfers, namely, the 1980 United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and, in 1991, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. In addition in 1991, the five Permanent Members of the Security Council adopted Guidelines for Conventional Arms Transfers and the General Assembly (in its resolution 46/36 L), reiterated its 1988 conviction, as expressed in its resolution 43/75 I, that conventional arms transfers in all their aspects deserve serious consideration by the international community.

8. In 1996, the Disarmament Commission adopted Guidelines for international arms transfers,[2] which in summary included the following principles: respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, including the right to self-defence, the sovereign equality of all its members, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and respect for human rights; the need for transparency in arms transfers; prohibition and eradication of illicit arms trafficking; ensuring that the level of armaments is commensurate with their legitimate self-defence and security requirements, including their ability to participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations; exercising restraint over the production and procurement of arms as well as transfers; taking into account economic and commercial considerations as well as the maintenance of international peace and security and efforts aimed at easing international tensions, promoting social and economic development, peacefully resolving regional conflicts, preventing arms races and achieving disarmament under effective international control; ensuring (by both the exporter and importer) that arms exports do not contribute to regional instability, conflict or to illicit arms trafficking; and ensuring that arms transfers are not used as a means to interfere in the internal affairs of other States.

9. The United Nations has also examined the destabilizing effects of the excessive and uncontrolled accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons. In May 2001 (by its resolution 55/255), the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (United Nations Firearms Protocol). In July 2001, the United Nations adopted the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.[3] This was followed by the adoption, on 8 December

[2] Report of the Disarmament Commission, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/51/42); http://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N96/127/60/pdf/N9612760.pdf.

[3] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/Conf.192/15), chap. IV, para. 24.

2005, of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (A/60/88 and Corr.2, annex). At the conclusion of the third biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 14 to 18 July, 2008, States renewed their commitment to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

10. Over the past three decades, international, regional and subregional organizations have undertaken initiatives addressing elements of the conventional arms trade. Experts discussed those instruments, arrangements and documents, noting that their scope varies and some also include transfer criteria and guidelines.

III. Trends in the international arms trade

11. In an effort to better understand the rationale for an arms trade treaty, experts also discussed current issues and trends in the international arms trade.

12. Experts observed that globalization had changed the dynamics of international arms trade. They noted that the types of weapon systems, equipment and their components being manufactured in cooperation, under joint ventures and licensing was increasing and that most arms-producing States were increasingly relying on technology transfers and upgrades from external sources, rather than from their own indigenous production.

13. Furthermore, experts acknowledged that on certain occasions, Security Council arms embargoes were violated. They observed that the weapons traded in the illicit market frequently come from unlicensed production and transfers, unlawful re-export and illegal brokering, and unsecure weapons storage and transportation. In addition, they observed that such weapons could be used for terrorist acts, organized crime and other criminal activities.

14. Experts also observed that global arms production and trade constituted a significant contribution to the economy and employment in a number of countries. At the same time, trade in arms had become globalized and more competitive. It was also recognized that there were different motivations for conventional arms production and acquisition.

IV. Feasibility of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

15. In accordance with its mandate, the Group examined, without prejudice to the eventual outcome and with differing views, a large variety of substantive issues related to the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The Group also recognized that numerous unresolved issues in the global conventional arms trade required further discussion. It also recognized that the question of feasibility had both political and technical dimensions and that it impacted the security concerns of all States. Some experts

expressed the view that a potential legally binding arms trade treaty was not the only option for addressing the issue.

16. It was noted that the feasibility of a potential arms trade treaty would be dependent on establishing its collectively agreed objectives, its practical applicability, its resistance to political abuse and its potential for universality. Any consideration of the feasibility of a potential arms trade treaty was seen to be dependent on its scope and parameters, which were seen as interrelated factors that would require open, transparent, inclusive and universal discussions.

17. The Group recognized that the key condition to answer the question of feasibility would lie with the clear definition of the fundamental goals and objectives of a potential arms trade treaty. It was noted that a broad range of factors could be considered, including regional stability, armed conflicts, issues relating to unlawful transfers to non-State actors (understood as individuals or entities not acting under the lawful authority of any State), international human rights law and international humanitarian law and social and economic development, among others. To be feasible, a potential arms trade treaty would need clear definitions and be fair, objective, balanced, non-political, non-discriminatory and universal within the framework of the United Nations.

18. It was also mentioned that, were an arms trade treaty to be considered feasible, it would need to reflect respect for the sovereignty of every State, without interfering in the internal affairs of States or their constitutional provisions, and respect for their territorial integrity. Exclusively internal transfers or national ownership provisions, including national constitutional protections on private ownership within that State's territory, should not fall under an arms trade treaty.

19. Experts emphasized the importance of objective and agreed global criteria that reflect respective responsibilities of exporters and importers. Experts mentioned issues that were relevant to the discussion of feasibility, such as operational mechanisms, including information-sharing and exchange, reporting mechanisms and international cooperation and assistance.

V. Scope of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

20. Experts considered, without prejudice to the outcome and with differing views, the types of weapons and activities and/or transactions that could potentially be included or not within the scope of a potential arms trade treaty. In addition, a variety of views were presented regarding whether the scope of the treaty was to be focused on "common international standards" of transfer or whether it was to consider the types of weapons and activities and/or transactions that could be potentially included within the scope of the arms trade treaty.

21. No single existing instrument contains a list that might encompass the range of options raised in the submissions from Member States regarding the scope of a potential arms trade treaty. The Group considered the seven categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, small arms and light weapons and whether categories, such as ammunition, explosives, components, defence services, technology related to the manufacture of weapons and ammunition should be

included. The Group discussed the balance between broad definitions that remain adaptable to technological advances and more detailed definitions that potentially require more regular review. In all cases, clarity in terms of purpose and implementation would be necessary. It was noted that the particular nature of the lawful trade in sport and hunting arms should be taken into account in a potential arms trade treaty.

22. Experts discussed the types of activities/transactions that might be included in a potential arms trade treaty. Some of the activities discussed included the following: exports, imports, transfers, re-exports, transit, trans-shipment, licensing, transportation, technology transfer and manufacturing and foreign licensed production, as well as countering illegal re-exports, unlicensed production and transfers, illicit arms brokering, and transfers of arms to non-State actors. Experts also mentioned stockpiles and production of conventional weapons, while respecting the rights of States with regards to the non-interference in their internal affairs. Experts also discussed existing definitions of some of the activities.

23. Due to the fact that small arms and light weapons, among conventional arms, have caused immense human suffering and political instability in different parts of the world, experts expressed the view that combating illicit trade and unlawful transfers to non-State actors must be adequately addressed.

VI. Draft parameters of a comprehensive legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms

24. Experts agreed that principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations would be central to any potential arms trade treaty. The Group also discussed, with differing views, the applicability of existing international human rights law and international humanitarian law, while bearing in mind that any potential arms trade treaty should remain objective, non-discriminatory and resistant to political misuse in recognition of the fact that any potential arms trade treaty would need to respect the sovereignty and rights of every State under the Charter of the United Nations. In the same vein, experts discussed other possible parameters, including the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Guidelines adopted by the five Permanent Members of the Security Council and the Disarmament Commission Guidelines for international arms transfers, with a view to examining their potential relevance to the parameters of a potential arms trade treaty.

25. Experts also raised the need to address the following thematic aspects: terrorism, organized crime and other criminal activities; maintaining regional stability; promoting socio-economic development; unlawful transfers to non-State actors, unauthorized re-export, unlicensed production, illicit brokering; right to manufacture and import; end use/end-user assurances; diversion; and compliance with Security Council arms embargoes and other existing international obligations as a necessary condition for transfers.

26. The Group also examined operational mechanisms, including information-sharing and exchange, reporting mechanisms and international cooperation and assistance. The Group considered whether and, if so, how a potential treaty might promote multilateral and ad hoc exchanges between States on a periodic or case-by-

case basis, within an appropriate framework and how States could be assisted in implementing and evaluating a potential treaty. This could include national points of contact, promotion of regular implementation and transparency reports.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

27. **In view of the complexity of the issues of conventional arms transfers considered by the Group on behalf of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, further consideration of efforts within the United Nations to address the international trade in conventional arms is required on a step-by-step basis in an open and transparent manner to achieve, on the basis of consensus, a balance that will provide benefit to all, with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations at the centre of such efforts.**

28. **The Group recognized that there are different motivations for conventional arms production and acquisition. The Group observed that the weapons being traded in the illicit market can be used for terrorist acts, organized crime and other criminal activities. In addition, the Group acknowledged the need to prevent the diversion of conventional arms from the legal into the illicit market.**

29. **The Group acknowledged the respective responsibilities of exporters and importers. In order to begin improving the current situation, the Group recognized the need for all States to ensure that their national systems and internal controls are at the highest possible standards, and that States in a position to do so could render assistance in this regard, upon request.**

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General Assembly

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Sixty-third session
Item 121 of the provisional agenda*
Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

Development Account

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is prepared pursuant to paragraph 15 of section VIII of General Assembly resolution 62/238, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of section VIII to it at its sixty-third session. The report includes the status of implementation of additional resources provided through General Assembly resolutions 62/235 ($5 million), 62/238 ($2.5 million) and 62/237 on the initial appropriation of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 ($18,651,300) and the status of implementation of decisions reflected in resolution 62/238, in particular identifying resources from possible reductions in administration and other overhead costs for transfer to the Development Account.

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.
** The present report has been submitted late owing to the need for extensive consultations.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Part one: status of implementation of projects funded from additional resources provided under various resolutions	3
III.	Part two: implementation of decisions reflected in section VIII of resolution 62/238	6
IV.	Recommendations	7
Annex		8

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with the request contained in paragraph 15 of section VIII of General Assembly resolution 62/238, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session a report on implementation of decisions reflected in that section.

2. The current report is presented in two sections, as follows:

(a) Status of implementation of projects funded from additional resources provided under resolutions 62/235, 62/237 and 62/238;

(b) Status of implementation of the provisions of section VIII of resolution 62/238 with regard to identification of savings through reduction in administration and overhead costs.

II. Part one: status of implementation of projects funded from additional resources provided under various resolutions

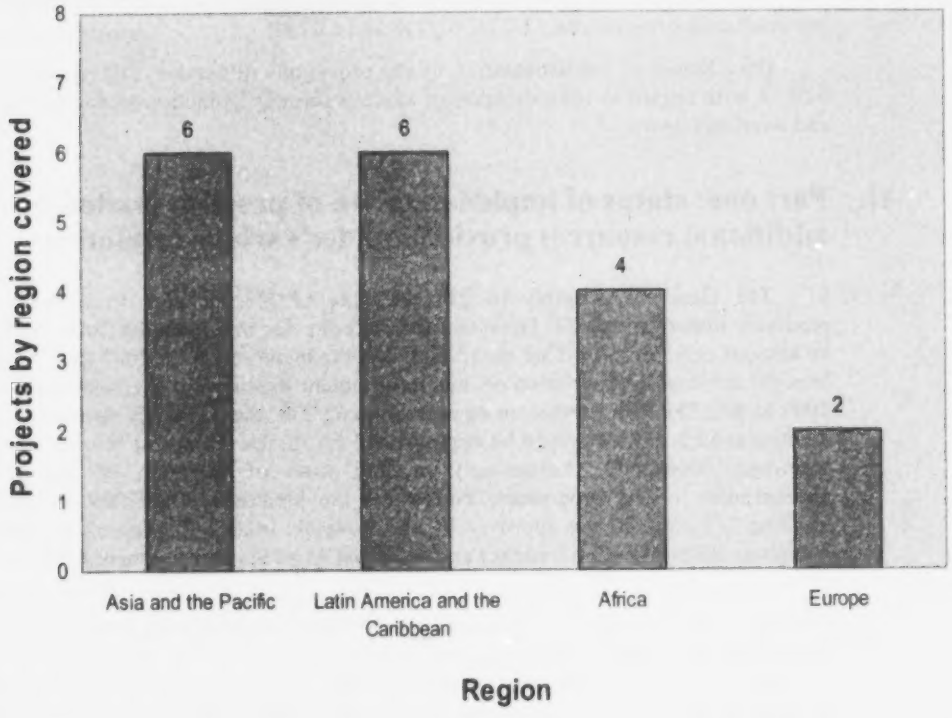
3. The General Assembly in its resolution 62/235, decided to increase the provision under section 34, Development Account, for the biennium 2006-2007, by an amount of $5 million. That decision, under the biennium 2006-2007 (5th tranche) brought the total appropriation of the Development Account for the biennium 2006-2007 to $21,551,900. Further, in its resolution 62/238, the Assembly decided that an additional $2.5 million would be appropriated for the Development Account for the biennium 2008-2009. Accordingly, at the time of adoption of the initial appropriation of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 an amount totalling $18,651,300 was approved by the Assembly in its resolution 62/237 for the biennium 2008-2009 (6th tranche) under section 34 of the Development Account.

4. Subsequent to the decisions taken by the General Assembly, the programme manager of the Development Account solicited additional projects from the various implementing entities. Based on the criteria set out for the utilization of the Development Account, the programme manager, after consulting with the relevant entities of the Executive Committee for Economic and Social Affairs, developed a short list of projects. The selection is representative of the projects proposed by both global and regional entities and spans geographical regions (see figure I). Nine entities will accordingly implement 15 regionally focused projects in Asia and the Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean; Africa; and Europe.

5. These new projects cover a range of current and emerging development needs. For example, four projects focus on meeting challenges relating to climate change in the Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific regions, including projects to build capacities of local governments in Africa, to address financial implications of external shocks in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean and to understand potential economic impacts of climate change. One project addresses sustainable energy policies for production and use of biofuels, with implications, inter alia, for food security. Four projects feature the strengthening of national capacities for sustainable development strategies, including in the countries of the Pacific region, by integrating the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Development of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States into their development strategies.

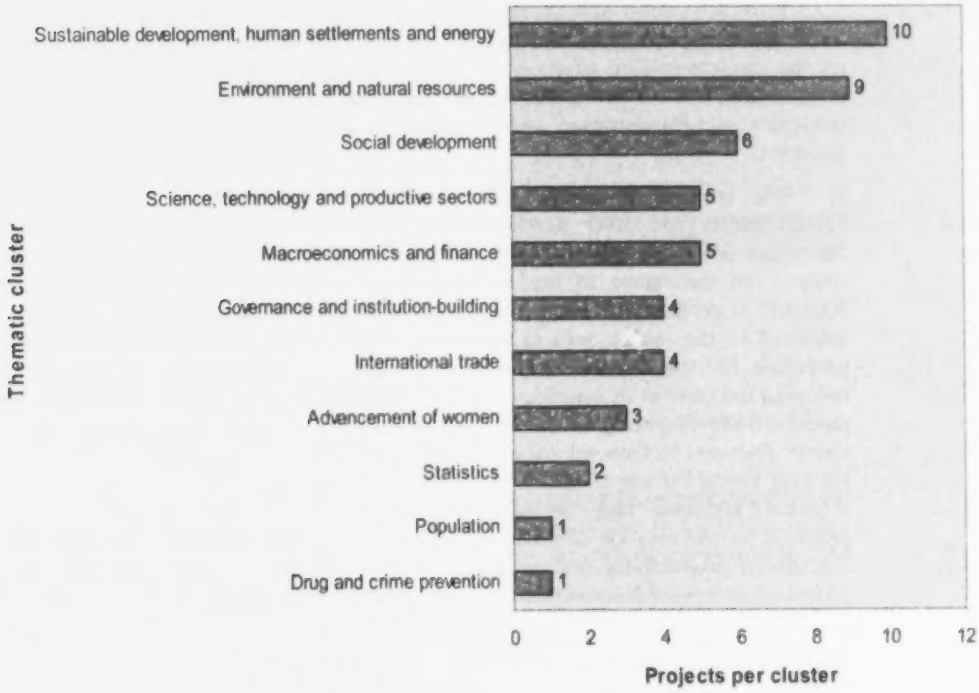
All projects assist in achieving the internationally agreed development goals. As with Development Account projects from prior bienniums, these new projects encompass an array of thematic clusters (see figure II).

Figure I
Development Account projects by region[a]



[a] Of the 15 projects, one project covers two regions; and one project covers three regions. The total number of projects reflected in the graph will thus appear greater than 15.

Figure II
Thematic coverage of Development Account projects selected[a]



[a] Projects cover more than one thematic cluster; they will thus appear in more than one category.

6. In this connection, in addition to the projects already indicated under section 34, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007[1] and the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009,[2] 10 new projects will be included in the biennium 2006-2007 and 5 new projects will be included in the biennium 2008-2009 of the Development Account. All 15 new projects will begin implementation in the biennium 2008-2009 (see annex for detailed information). The project concept papers have been endorsed by the programme manager and respective project documents are currently under preparation.

[1] A/60/6 (Sect. 34).
[2] A/62/6 (Sect. 34).

III. Part two: implementation of decisions reflected in section VIII of resolution 62/238

7. In its resolution 62/238, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the Development Account[3] and his fifth annual progress report on the implementation of projects financed from the Development Account[4] and encouraged him to work further towards identifying resources from possible reduction in administration and overhead costs for transfer to the Development Account.

8. The concept to create a "dividend for development" from savings in administration and other overhead costs stemmed from strategy 2, to create a "dividend for development" from savings in administration and other overhead costs — of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform".[5] The original purpose of the strategy, as reflected in the report, was to achieve savings in the context of the 1998-1999 proposals for the regular budget with Member States' support, for example by reducing the number of meetings and documents.[6] This was further elaborated in the report of the Secretary-General on reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs.[7] Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/12 B, the Secretary-General, in his note on the reform of the United Nations and the utilization of the Development Account, reflected that the underlying assumption in the Secretary-General's proposal for the creation of a Development Account was that any gains achieved as a result of productivity improvements such as streamlining and simplification of processes and procedures would become a permanent component of the Account.[8]

9. Since that time the Secretary-General has explored the possibility of identifying resources from a reduction in administration and overhead costs and realizing productivity gains. In response to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 52/235, the Secretary-General, in his report on the Development Account,[9] identified six major types of efficiency measures being pursued at that time under modalities for identifying gains and transferring funds to the Development Account. The Secretary-General has produced a number of reports[10] on enhancing cost-effectiveness in implementing legislative mandates, in which information was included on the implementation of measures designed to increase efficiency and productivity in the Secretariat. In particular, in his previous report on the Development Account, the Secretary-General noted that while efficiency measures have helped simplify processes, procedures, rules and services have improved the quality of services and have had an impact on mandated programmes in the form of increased benefits, the results of these efficiency measures cannot be quantified.[11] Furthermore, the Secretary-General in a number of his reports[12] has

[3] A/62/466.
[4] A/62/123.
[5] A/51/950 and Corr.1.
[6] Ibid., para. 234.
[7] A/52/758.
[8] A/52/848, para. 4.
[9] A/52/1009.
[10] A/52/685, A/52/758, E/AC.51/2002/2, A/58/70, A/60/342 and A/62/69.
[11] A/62/466, para. 69.
[12] A/59/397, A/61/282 and A/62/466.

highlighted that identifying efficiency savings in order to increase the resources base of the Development Account has not been feasible. It will also be recalled that, by its resolution 62/238, the General Assembly recognized that the current modalities for financing the Development Account, which is to be funded from savings achieved as a result of the efficiency measures that can be identified in the context of budget performance reporting, have not proven successful. Therefore, the original basis of increasing funding for the Development Account from efficiency savings, as decided in Assembly resolution 52/12 B, no longer seems to be applicable. The Secretary-General will continue to pursue the availability of any other options to those proposals set forth in previous reports of the Secretary-General. However, the Secretary-General will also be guided by any further advice by the Assembly on increasing resources for the Development Account.

IV. Recommendations

10. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Take note of the utilization of additional resources provided through various resolutions under the Development Account;**

(b) **Take note that the original basis of funding the Development Account from efficiency savings is no longer applicable and continue to keep the matter under consideration as to future opportunities for increasing resources for the Development Account.**

Annex

New projects to begin implementation in the biennium 2008-2009

Project title	*Amount (In United States dollars)*
Biennium 2006-2007 (5th tranche)	
Building capacities in the Asia-Pacific region to address financial implications of external shocks and climate change mitigation through innovative risk-management instruments (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)	621 000
Building statistical capacity in the low income countries of South-East Asia (Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific)	435 000
Integrating climate change into national sustainable development strategies and plans in Latin America and the Caribbean (Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)	537 000
Enhancing the role of national economic and social councils for inclusive socio-economic policy development (Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa)	281 000
Improving water and health in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Economic Commission for Europe and World Health Organization)	352 000
Capacity-building of Pacific small island developing States to incorporate the Mauritius Strategy into national sustainable development strategies (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs)	631 000
Strengthening national capacities for sustainable production and consumption (United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)	483 000
Supporting Millennium Development Goal-based development strategies through integrated regional action (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe)	593 000
Strengthening national capacities to design and implement sustainable energy policies for the production and use of biofuels in Latin America and the Caribbean (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)	453 000
Strengthening African national capacity to prepare Millennium Development Goal-consistent poverty reduction strategies (Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs)	614 000
Biennium 2008-2009 (6th tranche)	
Strengthening capacity to design and implement national development strategies (Department of Economic and Social Affairs)	280 400
Strengthening science, technology and innovation policies for development in Latin America (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)	480 000
Building capacities of local governments in Africa to cope with climate change (UN-Habitat in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme)	451 000
Understanding potential economic impacts of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)	558 000
Regional harmonization of cyber legislation to promote the knowledge society in the Arab world (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia)	401 000

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Culture of peace

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to convey the attached annual report of the Alliance of Civilizations submitted to me by the High Representative, Jorge Sampaio.

I would be grateful if you would bring the report to the attention of the members of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

* A/63/150 and Corr.1.

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Alliance of Civilizations: annual report of the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

Summary

The present report highlights the main activities carried out by the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations and his secretariat between May 2007 and April 2008, in accordance with the implementation plan submitted to the Secretary-General on 14 June 2007. It complements the information contained in the report of the High-level Group on the Alliance of Civilizations as well as the Alliance's programme of action, which is outlined in part 2 of the implementation plan.

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Main activities	3
III.	First Alliance of Civilizations Forum: a turning point	8
IV.	Conclusion	10
Annex		
	Addendum to the implementation plan	12

I. Introduction

1. The Alliance of Civilizations was established in 2005 at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey, under the auspices of the United Nations. It aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among States and peoples across cultures and religions and, in the process, to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

2. The first phase of the Alliance started with the creation by the Secretary-General of a High-level Group of 20 eminent personalities mandated to produce a report exploring the roots of polarization between cultures and societies worldwide and proposing practical recommendations to address this growing trend. The High-level Group presented its report to Secretary-General Kofi Annan in November 2006.

3. In April 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, as High Representative for the Alliance. This marked the beginning of the second phase of the Alliance of Civilizations, with the development of an action-oriented implementation plan focusing on initiatives and projects in the areas of youth, media, education and migration.

4. On 14 June 2007, the High Representative submitted to the Secretary-General an implementation plan for 2007-2009 divided in two parts. Part 1 provided an overview of the defining principles and the structure that will support the work of the Alliance, including a mechanism for partnership building, advocacy, financing and priority setting in its four fields of action (i.e., youth, media, education and migration). Part 2 outlined the Alliance's programme of action for the coming two years, although a midterm review of the programme since the holding of the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum is expected.

5. The Alliance's focus on concrete initiatives was reinforced and consolidated at the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum, hosted by the Government of Spain in Madrid on 15 and 16 January 2008. The Forum was a high-profile, action-oriented event which brought together a powerful network of political leaders, Governments, international organizations, civil society groups, religious communities, as well as media and corporate leaders.

6. Being considered a turning point in the implementing process of the Alliance, the activities carried out between the appointment of the High Representative and the Forum were mostly dedicated to its preparation. During this period, apart from coordinating the overall activities and developing effective governance for the Alliance, the High Representative has developed an intensive programme of high-level consultations aimed at enlarging the "group of friends", reinforcing political support for the Alliance at the global level and promoting the work of the Alliance worldwide.

II. Main activities

7. Below are some of the achievements of the Alliance of Civilizations between May 2007 and the holding of the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum on 15 and 16 January 2008. A summary of that event and its main outcomes is included in section III of the present report.

Expansion of political support and momentum building

8. Since April 2007 the "group of friends" community has grown markedly — from 44 members when the High Representative was appointed to 84 at the time of writing of the present report. The geographical breadth of membership in the group is wide and, in many cases, their engagement with the Alliance is deepening, as reflected by attendance at the meetings of the group, senior-level participation in the first forum of the Alliance in Madrid and invitations for the participation of the Alliance or requests for the granting of its auspices for conferences and events organized by individual members of the group. The fact that the Alliance of Civilizations has been mentioned by the Secretary-General at his high-level meetings with both political and civil society leaders has been extremely helpful in building and maintaining the political support for the Alliance, and this support is greatly appreciated.

Establishment of national strategies to advance the Alliance of Civilizations

9. At the urging of the High Representative requesting that member States of the group of friends present national strategies for cross-cultural dialogue covering the four main fields of the Alliance (education, media, youth and migration), four countries — Spain, Turkey, Bulgaria and New Zealand — have announced national strategies to advance the objectives of the Alliance within their own borders, and more are expected to follow suit in the coming year. As the High Representative noted at the time he proposed the establishment of national strategies, this decentralization of activities related to the Alliance advanced with the support of strong political will in individual countries is perhaps the best way to ensure that the Alliance achieves sustainable and long-term impact.

[P]artnership agreements with major agencies

10. The Alliance of Civilizations has completed five partnership agreements with multilateral agencies and international organizations (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the League of Arab States, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the United Cities and Local Governments) all of which focus on specific elements of the Alliance's implementation plan, as endorsed by the Secretary-General in June 2007. A letter of intent has been signed with the Council of Europe confirming the mutual will to prepare a bilateral memorandum of understanding to be signed in the near future. Other international organizations, including the European Union, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, have also been approached in order to conclude memorandums of understanding with the Alliance.

11. These organizations and agencies represent the largest and most relevant entities working to foster cross-cultural understanding and cooperation, particularly between Western countries and predominantly Muslim countries, and, as such, are important stakeholders and actors. The partnership agreements reflect the seriousness with which the Alliance of Civilizations is taken by established players and also reflect the intention of the Alliance to act through cooperative arrangements with organizations that have well-established track records in fields of concern to the Alliance, including its intention to avoid duplication of efforts.

Expansion of financial support

12. Following the appointment of the High Representative in April 2007, a dedicated voluntary trust fund was established through which the Alliance has attracted over $3.8 million in financial support from 14 countries, including 10 first-time contributors. This represents a more than 100 per cent increase in funds raised between the launch of the Alliance in July 2005 and the appointment of the High Representative. The strong support of the Secretary-General, as indicated by his letter to all Heads of Government announcing the establishment of the trust fund and encouraging contributions to it, was critical to this fund-raising effort.

Establishment of a network of Alliance of Civilizations ambassadors

13. Criteria and a selection process for the appointment of "Alliance of Civilizations goodwill ambassadors" as well as a concept paper on a network of ambassadors have been developed. The Alliance ambassadors are to be a group of high-profile well-networked individuals who can extend the outreach and profile of the Alliance of Civilizations, advocate in favour of its objectives and projects, support fund-raising and, upon request by the High Representative, speak on behalf of the initiative in select international forums and meetings.

14. The plan is to create a functioning network, made up of three different types of ambassadors: a core group composed by former members of the High-level Group; group of eight personalities, chosen on the basis of their relevance and outreach within the four fields of action of the Alliance; and small group to be formed of a number of celebrities. In the time being, the High Representative approached the 20 former members of the High-level Group regarding their willingness to serve as the first slate of ambassadors. The formal procedure of appointment by the Secretary-General is under way.

Network of focal points of the Alliance

15. The High Representative called upon each of the members of the group of friends to appoint a focal point to serve as the national/principal coordinator on the Alliance's issues within countries and organizations and to serve as the main interlocutors with the Alliance.

16. The establishment of a network of focal points will facilitate a regular and consistent exchange of views on the Alliance as well as a closer cooperation among members of the group of friends in the four fields of action covered by the Alliance, with a view to advancing its goals.

Launch of the Alliance of Civilizations online clearing house

17. February 2008 marked the launch of the first theme on the Alliance of Civilizations clearing house, which focused on media literacy education (see http://www.aocmedialiteracy.org). In addition to the voluminous information on media literacy education programmes and policies available on the website, it has also become a virtual meeting place for media literacy education advocates, researchers and policymakers from every region of the world.

18. The Alliance has established partnership agreements with 16 universities and research centres and is in the process of negotiating more. It is intended that the site will be regularly populated with articles, announcements and reviews of conferences

and publications related to media literacy education. Given the growing presence of the media worldwide, the field of the media literacy education is becoming increasingly important within the broader field of cross-cultural relations and education for tolerance.

Launch of the Alliance of Civilizations rapid response media mechanism

19. In February 2008 the Alliance launched its rapid response media mechanism, an initiative aimed at supporting the work of media professionals by connecting them with leading experts and analysts, who can comment on intercultural issues, particularly in times of crisis. The mechanism works through outreach from the secretariat of the Alliance to leading media agencies and includes a web-based directory of experts and commentators (http://www.globalexpertfinder.org), which is easily searchable by subject and region of expertise as well as language capacity.

20. The concept of the media mechanism inspired a great deal of interest and support in both media and political circles during the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum in Madrid. President Tarja Halonen of Finland participated in the working session focused on the mechanism. Shortly thereafter, Finland established its own national rapid response media mechanism in the Alliance's model.

21. The mechanism has already been mobilized around the production, by the right-wing Dutch parliamentarian Geert Wilders, of a film denigrating Islam and desecrating Islam's holy book, the Qur'an. An opinion piece co-signed by Muslim religious leaders from diverse regions, a slate of 10 experts from diverse regions prepared to provide insightful comment and analysis on the film through mass media outlets and consultations with influential civil society partners to reduce potential negative fall-out were all mobilized in anticipation of the film's expected release date in late March 2008. The office of the High Representative has maintained contact with Dutch Government officials throughout this process to ensure coordination during the sensitive weeks leading up to the eventual release of the film.

Establishment of the Youth Solidarity Fund

22. The Alliance of Civilizations has launched a Youth Solidarity Fund to support youth-led initiatives that promote long-term constructive relationships between young people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. The Fund will provide seed funding in amounts of up to $20,000 to outstanding youth-led projects in one or more of the following areas: intercultural and interreligious exchanges; youth leadership training; and youth voices in the media. The need for the Fund was determined following consultations with diverse youth-led networks and youth-focused organizations, which made clear that there are a member of youth forums generating "calls to action" or programmatic ideas, but a lack of financial support to turn those plans into reality.

23. The Alliance Secretariat, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Project Services, is managing the Fund and is currently establishing a Youth Advisory Committee in cooperation with regional youth platforms to ensure youth participation in the selection of projects for funding. The European Youth Forum, the Islamic Conference Youth Forum and the Latin American Youth Forum have already agreed to serve on the Committee. Negotiations are under way with the Asian Youth Council, the Pan-African Youth Union and the Pacific Youth Council.

Together these youth-led organizations will provide global representation and outreach. The call for applications to the Youth Solidarity Fund was published on the Alliance website on 7 March 2008 and will remain open until the end of April.

Launch of two multi-million dollar funds in the fields of youth employment and mass media for social change

24. In the months leading up to the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum, the secretariat worked with civil society agencies, business leaders and investors and global personalities, including Queen Noor of Jordan and Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser el-Missned of Qatar, to lay the groundwork for two major new funds to be launched: the Silatech youth employment initiative and the Alliance of Civilizations Media Fund.

25. With an initial $100 million investment from Qatar and partnership agreements with both the World Bank and Cisco, Silatech aims to support youth enterprise and entrepreneurship, career counselling and job training, and to connect job supply with job demand, beginning with pilot programmes in the Arab world, where youth unemployment rates are among the highest in the world.

26. Announced at the Forum by Queen Noor, the Media Fund has been established with an initial $10 million contribution from private business leaders and partnerships with leading Hollywood production, distribution and talent agencies, including Participant Productions, Summit Entertainment and International Creative Management as well as an agreement with YouTube for Alliance media productions to be featured on a dedicated YouTube channel. Initial productions of the Media Fund will be feature films and documentaries that aim to address issues of cross-cultural relations by, for example, increasing and diversifying the portrayal of often-stereotyped minorities in major Hollywood film productions. The Fund will also support research on the impact of visual media on cross-cultural relations, violence and self-perception of minority communities. Initial research has already been commissioned and is under way through a joint research venture of the Harvard School of Public Health and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The visibility of the Alliance of Civilizations

27. Although much remains to be done to develop a consistent communications strategy for the Alliance, its visibility has increased significantly since April 2007. In the run-up to the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum in Madrid, the initiative's website was redesigned to emphasize its practical projects and partnerships, particularly in the areas of education, youth and media. Since the relaunch of the website, the number of hits reached over 300,000 in January 2008 and 200,000 in February 2008. Media coverage expanded significantly, particularly as a result of the forum. During and after the forum, over 800 media reports (including print, Internet, television and radio) focused on the Alliance and the outcomes of the forum. Coverage included reports from Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia and the United States of America.

28. The Alliance of Civilizations has also been represented — by the High Representative himself or by senior members of the Alliance of Civilizations secretariat — at over 50 international conferences and meetings since the High Representative was appointed in April 2007, indicating a high and widespread demand for information on and partnership with the Alliance.

29. Two initiatives drew significant attention from the international media: the Media Fund and the Youth Employment Centre (Silatech). An interview with the Secretary-General on Al Jazeera international at the time of the forum also helped bring international attention to the work and objectives of the Alliance. In addition, op-ed articles by the High Representative highlighted the work of the Alliance with audiences in the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

30. Moreover, since the launch of the media literacy education online clearing house, the rapid response media mechanism and the Youth Solidarity Fund, each of which has a web presence linked directly to the Alliance website, the Alliance secretariat has received increased interest from a wide variety of organizations and groups, particularly regional and international youth networks and associations, media outlets and international networks of universities and educational institutions. The recently activated online forum for the clearing house on media literacy education and the Alliance of Civilizations youth programme will serve as platforms for ongoing interactive discussions and debates in these respective areas, further enhancing the visibility of the Alliance.

III. First Alliance of Civilizations Forum: a turning point

31. Hosted by the Government of Spain, the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum convened over 500 delegates, leaders, activists and public figures from every region of the world in an effort to address the problems of growing extremism and polarization between cultures and communities. For over one and a half days, political leaders, including Heads of State and Government, civil society activists, Nobel laureates, corporate executives, religious leaders and leading scholars, dialogued and debated with each other, launched practical initiatives, and made commitments to action aimed at improving relations across regions and cultures.

32. The Madrid Forum provided participants with a unique international platform to develop joint initiatives and forge partnerships. In addition to a high-level political debate attended by ministers, major leading figures of international organizations and other senior representatives of the Alliance of Civilizations' "group of friends", the forum featured announcements of major new initiatives and project-specific working sessions on a wide range of cross-cultural issues, including media literacy education, conflict prevention at the community level and the contribution of the corporate sector to promoting intercultural understanding. With more than 1,000 journalists and media professionals attending the forum, the event received widespread international coverage.

33. Following opening remarks by the President of the Government of Spain, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, and the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Jorge Sampaio, the Forum featured three plenary panels which defined the priority issues to be addressed at the Forum and set a pragmatic tone for the ensuing discussions.

34. Preceding each panel was a major announcement which underscored the Alliance's results-oriented approach:

(a) An announcement by Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser el-Missned of Qatar of a $100 million investment to launch Silatech, a global youth employment initiative involving founding partnerships with the World Bank and Cisco;

(b) An announcement by Queen Noor of Jordan of an independent Alliance of Civilizations Media Fund to support film productions that foster cross-cultural understanding, with an initial $10 million committed and founding partnerships with major Hollywood talent, distribution and production companies.

35. Participants spent the remainder of the first day of the forum and the morning of the second day in smaller focused discussion groups, including a high-level political dialogue for members of the Alliance of Civilizations' group of friends, eight working sessions and two working breakfasts. In these sessions, participants delved deeper into the issues of politics, economics, culture and religion that are central to expanding cross-cultural understanding, shared security, and peace. Several practical initiatives were generated or launched, including:

(a) Announcements by Governments of national strategies aimed at advancing the objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations;

(b) Signing of partnership agreements and memorandums of understanding between the Alliance and major multilateral agencies and international organizations;

(c) Establishment of a network of goodwill ambassadors, which former members of the high-level group were invited to join;

(d) The launch of a rapid response media mechanism;

(e) The debut of an online clearing house on policies and projects related to the Alliance;

(f) Formation of a North-South network of private foundations and philanthropists;

(g) Issuing of a consensus statement by diverse religious leaders committing to advance conflict resolution and to aid youth to avoid the allure of extremists;

(h) Commitment by the United Nations Global Compact to producing a publication aimed at raising the visibility of best practices in the corporate sector towards supporting cross-cultural relations;

(i) Prioritization of cross-regional youth mobilization and exchanges to be supported by a newly created Youth Solidarity Fund.

36. In the framework of the high-level debate, restricted to members of the group of friends, discussions at the policymaking level were held that highlighted the importance to move the Alliance forward in 2008, including: developing joint multi-stakeholder initiatives at the regional level aimed at promoting intercultural understanding and preventing the mounting of tensions and the rise of extremism; contributing to the improvement of intercultural dialogue in countries belonging to the European-Mediterranean region; and launching a number of activities within the framework of city diplomacy.

37. The third plenary panel held at the end of the forum served to make the transition from the wide-ranging discussions held at the forum to the mechanisms for implementation and action that are to follow in the coming months. The High

Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations closed the forum by reviewing its main outcomes and committing to work with the members of the group of friends and the Alliance's many partner organizations to ensure follow-up on the ideas, commitments and project launches advanced at the forum. A full and comprehensive report on the forum is being prepared and will be disseminated shortly.

IV. Conclusion

38. In the last 10 months, the Alliance of Civilizations has made significant progress thanks to the engagement of the Secretary-General, the co-sponsors and the ever-growing group of friends. Roughly speaking, it can be said that the path has been set out: the report has been put into operation through a plan of action and the priority projects established therein have been put into motion; the Secretariat's staff of 10 is now nearly complete; the number of members of the group of friends has doubled; and both the States and the international organizations that make up the group of friends have now been called upon to perform a structural role that is absolutely irreplaceable in implementing the Alliance's objectives at the global level.

39. However, a great deal of the future of the Alliance will be determined in the coming months. In order to turn the Alliance into a sustainable initiative, three conditions need to be fulfilled: it has to be anchored in the regional processes under way and integrated into regional agendas; it has to be included in national agendas; it has to succeed in mobilizing civil society if its ultimate goal — to achieve small improvements in the field that will bring fresh hope to people — is not to be compromised.

40. This is why the High Representative has been insisting and will continue to insist on the importance of the national strategies for cross-cultural dialogue at the State level; on the partnership agreements with international organizations and bodies; and on the strengthening of the network to bring on board civil society's input and contribution.

41. In order to achieve these goals, the High Representative will put forward some additional ideas to materialize the Alliance's aims and turn them into deliverables, taking advantage of the strong commitment by several States to help move the Alliance forward; of new possibilities of cooperation stemming from partnerships with some prominent international organizations; and of ongoing discussions with civil society representatives at large. These proposals should be considered as complementing the priority projects identified in the implementation plan, which will be developed throughout the year.

42. As for the main challenges ahead of the Alliance, to be overcome in the coming months, four should be stressed: unity of intentions and of action; integration; keeping the Alliance a lightweight but effective structure; and financing.

43. Each partner may be tempted to use the Alliance as an instrument in the service of their own interests. But it is essential, in addition to the multiplicity of uses to which it can be put, to preserve the unity of intentions and of action. In order to maintain long-term coherence and sustainable results, the unity and the depth of the Alliance's agenda should be increased. Therefore, unity of purpose and a deepening, insofar as the plan of action is concerned, of the implementation of

projects, programmes and initiatives will be a key priority for the High Representative in the coming months.

44. There must also be an integration of the agenda of the Alliance within the United Nations system, with the regional processes under way, and also with national policies and regional and local initiatives. The High Representative will focus his action on promoting these goals. A particularly critical point which has to be developed as a top priority is the full integration of the Alliance's agenda within the complex United Nations structure in order to take advantage of possible synergies, stimulate a closer cooperation and help improve coordination of the many parts of the institutional machinery of the United Nations in the areas of direct concern to the Alliance. Moreover, the Alliance should start emerging smoothly as a tool for preventive diplomacy aimed at intervening in pre- and post-cultural conflict situations.

45. To ensure that the Alliance remains a lightweight but effective structure will be a third priority for the High Representative. In order to achieve this goal, the full development of the network of goodwill ambassadors of the Alliance, the focal points and the partnerships with organizations of civil society, foundations and the corporate sector to help us in advancing our common goals is of paramount importance.

46. Fund-raising efforts for the Alliance have generated results, and the Secretary-General's letter to Heads of Government in that regard provided significant support. But these efforts need to be sustained in order to ensure the long-term viability of the Alliance. In the coming months, the High Representative will be approaching a range of possible funders, including Governments, foundations and corporate players.

47. Raising the profile of the Alliance and its outreach is another priority for the coming months. On the one hand, this means bringing on board some remaining key players (States, international and regional organizations, or other influential non-State actors such as religious and confessional groups); on the other hand, it means developing a worldwide communications strategy for the Alliance.

Annex

Alliance of Civilizations: addendum to the implementation plan

March 2008

I. Introduction

Subsequent to the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Madrid on 15 and 16 January 2008, a number of decisions and initiatives have emerged that will help consolidate the work of the Alliance and further define its main strategic objectives.

Taking stock of these initiatives and of the outcomes of the Madrid Forum, the present addendum outlines additional priority areas that are complementary to the Alliance's implementation plan and that will help shape the work of the Alliance in the 2008-2009 period.

The addendum represents the midterm review of the Alliance's programme of action, announced in the introductory remarks to part 2 (Alliance of Civilizations programme of action) of the implementation plan (2007-2009), which was presented in June 2007.

II. Structure of the Alliance

A. The Alliance of Civilizations Voluntary Trust Fund

Following the presentation of the terms of reference for the Alliance's Voluntary Trust Fund, fund-raising efforts for the Alliance have generated results, and the Secretary-General's letter to Heads of Government in that regard provided significant support. These efforts need to be sustained, however, in order to ensure the long-term viability of the Alliance. In the coming months, the High Representative will be approaching a range of possible funders, including Governments, foundations and corporate players. In this task, the High Representative could be helped by goodwill ambassadors for the Alliance as well as by the North-South network of private foundations and philanthropists created at the forum. In this regard, the role of the group of friends will also be crucial.

B. Group of friends

Further expansion of the group of friends will be sought, particularly in order to bring on board a number of missing significant partners.

C. Focal points

In order to strengthen the process of developing these partnerships, each member of the group of friends (both Governments and multilateral organizations) should designate a focal point to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of national strategies, oversee regional partnerships and liaise with the Alliance secretariat.

D. Network of Alliance ambassadors

Following the Madrid Forum, plans for the establishment of a network of Alliance ambassadors have been further defined, in accordance with the concept paper, Network of the Alliance of Civilizations' ambassadors, circulated at the forum in Madrid.

The network will be developed to support the work of the Alliance and the High Representative by engaging, inter alia, in public advocacy to raise awareness of the aims, objectives and priorities of the Alliance, convey messages about its activities (in the form of public declarations, op-eds, and video statements) and extend its public outreach, including fund-raising. The ambassadors will hold at least one meeting a year, on the occasion of the Alliance's annual Forum. There will be three categories of Alliance ambassadors:

(a) Former members of the high-level group (20): their main task will be to disseminate knowledge about the Alliance and to help build support for it in their own regions or particular spheres of influence;

(b) Experts in the areas of youth, media, education and migration (8): their role will be to help build support for the Alliance and its projects in their fields of activity;

(c) Celebrities (5-10): this group will consist of high-profile personalities and celebrities from the worlds of entertainment, sport and entrepreneurship, including leaders and philanthropists. Their role will be to help highlight the work of the Alliance and make its objectives better known and understood by the general public.

E. Informal advisory group to the High Representative

As announced in September 2007 at the first high-level meeting with the members of the group of friends, an informal advisory group to help the High Representative manage the Alliance of Civilizations will be set up. Rather than being an institutional body, it will be a small management think tank, serving as a sounding board for the concerns of the High Representative, sharing ideas and giving him honest advice.

It will be composed of 12 people who share a genuine interest in the thematic fields and areas of action of the Alliance and who will be able to develop a relationship of trust with the High Representative. Apart from representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsoring countries, Spain and Turkey, the other nine members will be selected from among distinguished world personalities who are qualified on the basis of achievement, experience, independence and integrity, taking into account the cultural and religious divides worldwide.

III. Meetings and forums of the Alliance

A. Meetings of the group of friends

In principle, the group of friends will meet as a whole four times a year — twice as a meeting of permanent representatives (midterm meetings) and twice as a ministerial meeting (in September, during General Assembly week and on the

occasion of the annual forum of the Alliance). As the group of friends has become quite a large assembly, functional ways to facilitate a more informal dialogue between participants should be examined and implemented.

B. Meetings of focal points

In order to promote exchange of information and experience in the process of developing and implementing national strategies, a voluntary task force, bringing together the focal points of the group of friends, will be established to provide support to members of the group wishing to take advantage of the experience of others and share best practices.

C. Boosting regional action by the Alliance

In order to build global support for the Alliance and support the implementation of its initiatives internationally, it is necessary to create strong regional networks. These networks should be supported by proactive leadership from Governments, civil society and religious groups, as well as the private sector.

The Alliance will promote a set of initiatives, hosted on a voluntary basis by States, aimed at addressing specific issues and concerns shared by a number of members. A calendar of initiatives will be proposed to the group of friends in the near future.

IV. Partnership/project development

To support its implementation process, the Alliance will seek to further strengthen its network of partnerships, particularly among the group of friends, but also with civil society organizations, such as universities and foundations.

A. National strategies for cross-cultural dialogue

In order to support the objectives and projects of the Alliance worldwide, members of the group of friends are encouraged to develop national strategies for cross-cultural dialogue, which should outline, inter alia, plans for incorporating intercultural projects into Government policies on education, youth, media and migration, as well as specific initiatives and collaborative projects across government departments. Such plans should be made in partnership with other Governments, regional and multilateral organizations and civil society bodies.

International and multilateral organizations that are members of the group of friends are also encouraged to assist countries in developing national strategies that incorporate intercultural projects into their plans of action and promote collaboration with other organizations regionally and globally.

B. Implementation of projects in collaboration with international organizations, partners and other stakeholders

To follow up on the memorandums of understanding that have been signed with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the League of Arab States, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and United Cities and Local Governments and on the letter of intent signed with the

Council of Europe, the Alliance will work closely with each of these partners to identify concrete projects and initiatives that can be launched or further developed.

The Alliance will promote partnerships and joint action in two priority areas. These multi-stakeholder partnerships will involve Governments, multilateral organizations, civil society, foundations, religious groups, the media and the private sector.

C. The Mediterranean region: one of the Alliance's main areas of focus

The Alliance will seek to support ongoing efforts to improve intercultural dialogue within and among European and Muslim societies and communities in the Mediterranean region through collaboration with a number of regional and multilateral organizations as well as Governments. In so doing, the Alliance will focus on strengthening and expanding existing initiatives in order to avoid duplication of programmes.

D. Investing in city diplomacy initiatives

The Alliance will seek to serve as a catalyst to promote city-to-city diplomacy initiatives and support efforts of local and municipal authorities to create the conditions for sustainable peace between divided communities. To this end, the Alliance will promote the establishment of a coalition of Alliance mayors, in cooperation with, inter alia, United Cities and Local Governments.

E. Network of philanthropic foundations and private funders

A Network of philanthropic foundations and private funders will be established to share information about intercultural programmes and other issues related to the Alliance, raise awareness of ongoing initiatives in these areas and explore ways to leverage existing resources for greater impact.

F. Network of universities, research centres and think tanks

The Alliance will develop a global network of universities and think tanks in order to support its work and help improve relations among diverse cultural and religious communities worldwide. This network will start with a core group of 10 to 15 universities and research centres with strong track records in intercultural and conflict resolution studies. The main objectives of the network will be: (a) to promote cooperation, exchange of expertise and joint research among participating institutions in the areas of intercultural dialogue and cross-cultural relations; (b) to support and help disseminate research about these issues within and beyond the network, particularly among policymakers, Government departments, civil society organizations and the media; and (c) to support the development of the Alliance of Civilizations projects.

V. Project development

A. Rapid response media mechanism

Following the successful launch of the global expert finder resource, the Alliance will work on the expansion of the database, create additional features

(including improved search capability, expert interviews and enhanced design) and organize media training sessions for experts.

B. Alliance of Civilizations clearing house

Further to the successful creation of the media literacy education theme under the Alliance of Civilizations on the clearing house project, the Alliance will work towards the strengthening of the network of partner organizations that will administer the clearing house. The Alliance will also initiate work on the development of other clearing house themes.

C. Youth programme

1. Youth Solidarity Fund

A Youth Solidarity Fund will be established to provide seed funding to outstanding youth-led projects that promote long-term intercultural bridge-building. Grant size will vary from $5,000 to $20,000. The Alliance will strive to ensure a geographic and thematic balance among selected projects. The Alliance secretariat will manage the Fund and work with partners and a youth advisory committee to ensure youth participation in the selection of projects for funding.

2. Partnership development

In accordance with memorandums of understanding signed to date, the Alliance will strengthen its collaboration with partner organizations in the youth area. The Alliance will also engage regional youth platforms to provide youth representation and mainstream youth voices in its initiatives by setting up a youth advisory committee.